

VOICES OF INDIAN FREEDOM MOVEMENT

VOICES OF INDIAN FREEDOM MOVEMENT

(VOICE OF NON-VIOLENT AND TRUTHFUL NATIONALISM)

VOLUME IV

(Book 1)

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included Mahatma Gandhi, the Father of the Indian Nation, and his great lieutenants like Jawaharlal Nehru, Maulana Azad, Rajendra Prasad, Sardar Patel, C.R. Das and Subhas Chandra Bose. One should not raise any point of objection about the inclusion of Das and Bose in this volume for the obvious reason that the former, though a critic of Gandhi's thesis of non-violent non-cooperation, accepted the line of the Mahatma after the decision of the Congress in this regard at its Special Session held at Calcutta and then its confirmation at the regular session held at Nagpur in 1920, and the latter, though sticking to a line of militant confrontation so as to win Swaraj, respectfully called the Mahatma the 'Father of the Nation' and continued to pay him his best and highest regard even after leaving the Congress in 1939. Gandhiji blessed the Swarajists and paid glowing tributes to Bose for his peerless sacrifices. I could have included some more leaders in this volume which could not be possible owing to the limitation of space. For this I crave the indulgence of the readers. I, however, hope that my scheme would receive the appreciation of the readers who would find here much for the purpose of their advanced study or research in this important field of modern Indian history and politics.

I have drawn material from numerous published sources, Indian and foreign, according to my scheme and I offer my sincere gratitude to all of them. I am thankful to a large number of my friends for the help they extended to me for the completion of this project. I am much thankful to Seema Saxena and Seema Johari who helped me in the collection and arrangement of the matter and checking of proofs. In particular, I am grateful to my Publishers who appreciated this project and took pains to bring out the volumes in a record time.

—J.C. Johari

INTRODUCTION

Indian freedom movement underwent a fundamental change after the first World War when Mahatma Gandhi emerged on the national scene like a peerless leader. In a very short time, he converted the struggle for independence into a genuine mass movement by carrying politics 'from the drawing rooms and council chambers to the streets and fields', and by giving it 'a new direction, a new constitution, a new organisational structure, a new technique of agitation, a new leadership and a new programme of action'.[1] In the words of Nehru, Gandhi "came like a powerful current of fresh air that made us stretch ourselves and take deep breaths ; like a beam of light that pierced that darkness and removed the scales from eyes ; like a whirlwind that upset many things, but most of all the working of people's minds. He did not descend from the top ; he seemed to emerge from the millions of India, speaking their language and incessantly drawing attention to them and their appalling condition."[2]

Gandhiji had created a name by launching the crusade of freedom in South Africa. When he came to Indian in 1915, he was an advocate of the line of winning 'freedom within the Empire'. Like other Moderate leaders, he expressed his loyalty to the British Empire. But, like the Extremists, he strongly advocated the cause of *swaraj* and *swadeshi*. However, he was different from both in view of the fact that he not only preached *swaraj* and *swadeshi*, he also discovered and revealed their possible and practicable implications. He started the trend of spiritualised politics by laying emphasis on the use of soul-force as the condition-precedent to the use of his novel methods of non-violence (*ahimsa*) and civil resistance by truthful means (*satyagraha*). But the promulgation of the Rowlatt Act and the tragedy of Amritsar had such a deep impact upon

1. S.R. Mehrotra : *Towards India's Freedom and Partition*, pp. 153-54.
2. Jawaharlal Nehru : *The Discovery of India*, p. 379.

his mind that he called the British rule 'Satanic' and resolved to see its termination. For this he offered his thesis of non-violent non-cooperation. And yet he insisted on the use of 'all legitimate and peaceful means for winning swaraj within the Empire if possible, and without the Empire if necessary'.

Such an importation of Gandhiji appeared too vague and vacillating, though he made it clear that 'swaraj within the Empire' could be possible if it placed India on terms of an equal and honourable partnership with British.[3] It shows that in the 1920s Gandhiji, who was a staunch loyalist, became a non-cooperator. He adhered to his chosen path that saw its second manifestation in the Salt Satyagraha of 1930-31. When the Second World War broke out in 1939, he repeated his desire to render cooperation to Britain as his principle of *ahimsa* required to help the enemy in times of trouble. But the stand of the British Government shattered his all hopes and he launched the Quit India Movement in 1942. He appreciated the Cabinet Mission Report (1946) as the best document that the foreign rule could offer. But things took a serious turn for the worse in the later part of 1946 when, in his own words, 'truth was at discount'. He fought for the cause of Hindu-Muslim unity at the cost of his life and yet the country could not be saved from the irreparable tragedy of partition.

In the history of India's freedom struggle Jawaharlal Nehru occupies a place next to that of Mahatma Gandhi. In spite of having difference of views with the Mahatma on many counts, Nehru faithfully adhered to the line of his political mentor. As one attracted to the principles of scientific socialism, he looked at the British bureaucratic rule as the source of political subjugation and economic exploitation of the country and saw emancipation of the countrymen in the termination of British imperialism along with its allies in the forms of native capitalism and feudalism. Thus, he aligned the meaning of Indian

3. While defining the meaning of swaraj, Gandhiji said : "It means a style such that we can maintain our separate existence without the presence of the English. If it is to be a partnership, it must be a partnership at will".

nationalism with Western socialism. As a democrat he condemned the ways of Fascism and Communism which made it clear that his socialism was like an Indian version of English Fabianism. He criticised the movement of the Extremist leaders in the early phase of the present century as 'reactionary' on account of drawing inspiration from Hindu religion and its ancient practices. Though he reacted against Gandhi's action of abruptly suspending the non-violent non-cooperation movement in February, 1922, after some time he could understand the mind of the Mahatma and became a true follower of the creed of non-violence.

The most distinctive contribution of Nehru should be traced in the fact that he gave a clear and final meaning to the concept of 'swaraj' by rechristening it as 'purna swaraj' (complete independence). It is true that the slogan of swaraj as the birth-right of the people had become a matter of faith, its real meaning remained clouded by the confusion of 'swaraj within the Empire' that came to be identified with the demand for Dominion Status. Great leaders like Tilak, Annie Besant, Jinnah, Lala Lajpat Rai, and Motilal Nehru had such a conception of swaraj in their minds. Even Gandhi made the meaning of swaraj equivocal by coining the phrase 'within the Empire if possible and without it if necessary'.[4] What he said at the Lahore Congress in 1929 in his presidential address put the seal of finality on the meaning of swaraj that signified nothing short of complete independence from the foreign yoke. Nehru was an internationalist. He desired happy synthesisation of nationalism with internationalism that could be possible only by immunising nationalism from its blind and aggressive overtones. As a true secularist, he condemned communalism as the Indian brand of Western Fascism. In very clear and strong terms he condemned the line of thought and action of the Muslim League. But as a stern realist, in June 1947 he

Nehru records his impression of the days of non-cooperation movement in these words: "It was obvious that to most of our leaders Swaraj meant something much less than independence. Gandhiji was delightfully vague on the subject and he did not encourage clear thinking about it either". *An Autobiography*, p. 76.

accepted the idea of country's partition as the only possible way to save the country from annihilation.

Maulana Azad occupies the highest place in the galaxy of great nationalist Muslim leaders of the country. Though a devout Muslim he was a true secularist. While subscribing to the cause of social regeneration of his co-religionists, he ever adhorred the idea of their alienation from the national mainstream. In this way, he stood at a pole different from that of Syed Ahmed Khan. He always worked for communal amity and so C. Rajagopalachari, in his tribute, called him 'the great Akbar of today'. He interpreted the principles of Islam so as to reveal their harmony with the precepts of Indian nationalism and thus he could boldy refute the pernicious two-nation theory of Jinnah. Without bothering for the wild invectives of Jinnah and other leaders of the Muslim League, he decried the formula of self-determination on communal lines as it would be harmful to the Muslims. His robust nationalism is evident from his own confession that the acceptance of the partition plan by some Congress leaders meant the end of his 'vision of a free and united India'.[5]

People become great by having and professing great ideas and happily honouring the decisions of the organisations to which they belong in spite of their views to the contrary. Though a critic of Gandhiji's thesis of non-cooperation, Deshbandhu Chittaranjan Das set an example by renouncing his lucrative legal practice in response to the call for non-cooperation adopted at the Special Session of the Congress held at Calcutta and confirmed at the regular session held at Nagpur in 1920. He took part in the satyagraha and remained under detention in 1921 for some time. Like all great leaders of his time he strove and worked for the cause of Hindu-Muslim unity. So strong was his passion for *swaraj* that he invented the strategy of smashing the Montford Reforms from within,

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5. In his autobiographical narrative, Maulana Azad shows his strong reaction against the decision of the Congress Working Committee in favour of partition. He says : "It was impossible for me to tolerate this abject surrender". *India Wins Freedom*, 1988 ed., p. 214.

i.e., by entering the Legislative Councils and then creating obstructions in the way of bureaucracy so as to signify the failure of the alien rule.[6] His programme of action had both negative or destructive and positive or constructive aspects—destruction of the rule of swollen-headed bureaucracy and achievement of swaraj. As he said on one occasion : "We want to destroy and get rid of a system which does no good and can do no good. We want to destroy it because we want to construct a system which can be worked with success and will enable us to do good to the masses". However, like Gandhiji, he believed in 'swaraj within the Empire if the Empire would recognize our rights, and outside the Empire if it does not.'

But unique is the place of Subhas Chandra Bose in the freedom struggle of our country. As a man of radical views and imbued with fiery nationalism, he left the Indian Civil Service and moved close to Jawaharlal Nehru with a view to give a leftist orientation to the pace of Indian freedom struggle. Thus, like Nehru, he criticised Gandhiji's action of abruptly suspending the non-violent non-cooperation movement in February. 1922. Though a member of the Nehru Committee, he did not appreciate some of its recommendations as those relating to the dominion status for the country and retention of the powers and privileges of the princely rulers in the future constitutional dispensation of India. In the 1930s his name was bracketed with Nehru in being a man of 'progressive' views and, for this reason, he remained the source of inspiration to the leaders of the Congress Socialist Party. But his differences with Gandhi and Nehru developed after 1935 on the issue of militant confrontation with the Raj.[7] By virtue of being a very popular leader he won the presidential election and chaired the Haripura session in 1938. In the face of opposition from the side of Gandhi and Nehru, he won the election for the same post again and presided at the Tripuri Congress in 1939. But shortly after-

6. As his biographe P.C. Ray observes that C.R. Das "became an awful portent of danger and a lion in the path of Indian bureaucracy". *Life and Times of C.R. Das*, p. 202.
7. Bose believed in the old Irish cry that "England's necessity is Ireland's opportunity". R.C. Majumdar : *The History of Freedom Movement in India*, Vol. III, p. 700.

wards, he resigned in protest when the A-ICC took an unprecedented step by passing a resolution asking the Congress President to form his Working Committee in consultation with Gandhiji in view of the prevailing critical conditions. Bose took it as a matter of personal humiliation and he left the Congress. In spite of all this, his regard for Mahatma Gandhi remained undiminished and he called him 'India's greatest man'.

Rajendra Prasad is regarded as a saintly figure in the galaxy of Indian freedom fighters. A man of simple life but high ideas, Rajen Babu understood the problems of the country from a rural point of view. As a true secularist, he espoused the cause of communal amity and, as a true Gandhian, he never wavered from the line of the Mahatma so much so that in the 1920s he happily placed himself in the category of the 'no-changers'. As a man of liberal disposition he strongly criticised the provisions of the Rowlatt Act and the tragedy of Jallianwala Bagh. He registered his serious protest against the terms of the Communal Award of Prime Minister Ramsay MacDonald and with some other leaders played instrumental in bringing Ambedkar face to face with Gandhi in the Yervada jail as a result of which Poona Pact came into being in 1932. When several proposals of India's partition came into limelight during the days of the Second World War, he refuted all on the basis of authentic interpretation of sociological and historical facts reinforced by the factors of reason and prudence. Unfortunately, his cogent arguments failed to carry conviction with the leaders of the Muslim League and the country witnessed the tragedy of the triumph of the pernicious two-nation theory of Jinnah.

Vallabhbhai J. Patel is rightly known as the 'iron man of India'. Like Prasad he had a rural background and, like other Congress leaders, he had firm faith in the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi. The Bardoli satyagraha made him so popular that Gandhiji called him 'Sardar'. He took activ · part in the no - violent non-cooperation movement, the Sa Satyagraha nd the Quit India agitation. One important point to be noted is that though he always stood for communal amity, he never appreciated the course of showing appeasement to any com-

munity, whether in majority or in minority. For this reason he appeared as the only great Congress leader who desired to adopt a very tough stand against the Muslim communalists, though for this he was misunderstood by some of his worthy colleagues like Nehru and Maulana Azad. He played a very crucial role in making the Congress leaders agree to the idea of country's partition on the plea that it was the only way to save the body as a whole after amputating its incurably diseased part.[8]

In short, the Congress represented the nation and its important leaders included in this study represented the Congress in the true sense of the term.[9] Gandhiji was the common leader of all who, in spite of their personal views to the contrary on many counts, happily worked under his arch-leadership and thereby desired to be called prominent Gandhi-ites. It is, however, a different matter that in the last days of the British raj things reached such a sory pass owing to the violent intransigence of the Muslim League that the Mahatma was put on the periphery and the realists of the Congress oligarchy had their final say in such an important matter. Nehru and Patel justified their stand in the name of realism,[10] Prasad kept quiet with a subdued heart, and Azad revealed his anguished feelings at the last-moment change even in the stand of Mahatma Gandhi.

—J.C. Johari

8. See K.L. Panjabi : *The Indomitable Sardar*, p. 124.
9. John Gunther well observes : "If Patel is the ruthless first of the Congress triumvirate, and Maulana Azad a part of the brain and spiritual enlightenment, then Babu Rajendra Prasad is the heart". *Inside Asia*, p. 49.
10. In 1956 Nehru told Michael Brecher thus : " I suppose it was the compulsion of events and the feeling that we could not get out of the deadlock of morass by pursing the way we have done; it became worse and worse." See Leonard Mosley : *Last Days of British* Raj., p. 248. In 1960 Nehru repeated the same view in a little different way : "The truth is that we were tired men and we were getting on in years too. Few of us could stand the prospect of going to prison again and if we had stood out for a united India as we wished, prison obviously awaited us". *Ibid.*

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PART I

PROMINENT FIGURES OF NON-VIOLENT AND TRUTHFUL NATIONALISM

NATIONAL ANTHEM

Jana-gana-mana-adhinayaka, jaya he
Bharat-bhagya-vidhata
Punjab-Sindhu-Gujarat-Maratha-
Dravida-Utkal-Banga
Vindhya-Himachala-Yamuna-Ganga
Uchchala-Jaladhi-Taranga
Tava subha name jage,
Tava subha asisa mange,
Gahe tava jaya-gatha
Jana-gana-mangala-dayaka, jaya he
Bharat-bhagya-vidhata,
Jaya he, jaya he, jaya he,
Jaya jaya jaya, jaya he.

(English rendering

Thou art the ruler of the minds of the people,
Thou dispenser of India's destiny.
Thy name rouses the hearts of the Punjab, Sind,
Gujarat and Maratha, of Dravid, Orissa and Bengal.
It echoes in the hills of the Vindhayas and Himalayas, mingles in the music of Jamuna and Ganges, and is chanted by the waves of the Indian Sea.
They pray for thy blessings and sing thy parise.
The saving of all people waits in thy hand,
Thou dispenser of India's destiny.
Victory, Victory, Victory to thee.

—Rabindranath Tagore

1

MAHATMA GANDHI

[Universally known as the 'Mahatma' (Great Soul) and the 'Father of the Indian Nation' and also affectionately and respectfully addressed as the 'Bapu' (Father) by his devoted followers, M.K. Gandhi (1869-1948) occupies a peerless place in the history of India's freedom movement. After making his name in the freedom fight of South Africa, he joined the Indian freedom struggle in 1915 and in no time he became the widely accepted leader. His novel techniques of *ahimsa* (non-violence) and *satyagraha* (insistence on truth) had a unique effect on spiritualising the nature of our struggle against the British rule. It is true that in the beginning he could not convince his critics who had serious misgivings about the implications and efficaciousness of these novel techniques. But after some time, most of them could understand and appreciate the mind of the Mahatma and they preferred to work under his marvellous leadership. He identified himself with the common man and thus by dragging the dumb millions into the freedom struggle, he converted the anti-colonial fight into a mass movement. It also became truly secular in the sense that people in large numbers, belonging to different faiths and creeds, paid heed to the call of the Mahatma. Moreover, by attracting all sections of the people, whether high or low, rich or poor, capitalist or worker, landlord or peasant, urban or rural, into the arena of freedom struggle, he converted it into a real nationalist movement. Finally, by disfavouring large-scale industrialisation and wholesale nationalisation of private property and instead by laying stress on the improvement of cottage and small-scale industries, by advancing the new idea of trusteeship, and by working for the upliftment of the

weaker and depressed sections of the community, he aligned the case of our nationalism with a new type of socialism what he termed Sarvodaya or welfare of all. Thus, Gandhi became the Congress—the organised expression of Indian nationalism—and his voice meant the voice of India. W.E.S. Holland could grasp this reality when he commented that there "is no quicker way to understand the heart of India than to study Mr. Gandhi."]

HIND SWARAJ*

(EXTRACTS)

The Partition of Bengal

Reader : Considering the matter as you put it, it seems proper to say that the foundation of Home Rule was laid by the Congress. But you will admit that it cannot be considered a real awakening. When and how did the real awakening take place ?

Editor : The seed is never seen. It works underneath the ground, is itself destroyed, and the tree which rises above the

*Gandhiji wrote *Hind Swaraj* in Gujarati language in 1909 on board the ship during his return voyage from England. Its English translation appeared in 1910. It created some wrong impressions in the minds of the readers. So he issued a statement in his *Indian Opinion* (dated 29 April, 1914) by making it clear that this monograph did not advocate the use of physical force at any time and in any circumstances. It "advocates always the use of soul force to gain the desired end. If the result of its teaching has been to create hatred for the British and to suggest that they should be expelled through armed fighting or use of violence otherwise, I am unhappy to know this. Such was by no means my object in writing *Hind Swaraj* and I can only say that those who have drawn from it the foregoing conclusion, have totally failed to understand the book. I, for one, bear no ill-will against the British, or against any people, or individuals. All living creatures are of the same substance as all drops of water in the ocean are the same in substance... The key to an understanding of the *Hind Swaraj* lies in the idea that worldly pursuits should give way to ethical living. This way of life has no room for violence in any form against any human being, black or white." *Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi*, Vol. 12, p. 412.

ground is alone seen. Such is the case with the Congress. Yet, what you call the real awakening took place after the Partition of Bengal. For this we have to be thankful to Lord Curzon. At the time of the Partition, the people of Bengal reasoned with Lord Curzon, but, in the pride of power, he disregarded all their prayers—he took it for granted that Indians could only pattle, that they could never take any effective steps. He used insulting language, and, in the teeth of all opposition, partitioned Bengal. That day may be considered to be the day of the partition of the British Empire. The shock the British power received through the Partition has never been equalled by any other act. This does not mean that the other injustices done to India are less glaring than that done by the Partition. The salt tax is not a small injustice. We shall see many such things later on. But the people were ready to resist the Partition. At that time, the feeling ran high. Many leading Bengalis were ready to lose their all. They knew their power ; hence the conflagration. It is now well nigh unquenchable ; it is not necessary to quench it either. Partition will go, Bengal will be re-united, but the rift in the English barque will remain : it must daily widen. India awakened is not likely to fall asleep. Demand for abrogation of Partition is tantamount to demand for Home Rule. Leaders in Bengal know this, Brtish officials realise it. That is why, Partition still remains. At time passes, the Nation is being forged. Nations are not formed in a day ; the formation requires years.

Reader : What, in your opinion, are the results of Partition ?

Editor : Hitherto we have considered that for redress of grievances, we must approach the Throne, and, if we get no redress, we must sit still, except that we may still petition. After the Partition, people saw that petitions must be backed up by force, and that they must be capable of suffering. This new spirit must be considered to be the chief result of Partition. That spirit was seem in the outspoken writings in the Press. That which the people said tremblingly and in secret began to be said and to be written publicly. The Swadeshi movement was inaugurated. People, young and old, used to run away at the sight of an English face, it now no

longer awed them. They did not fear even a row, or being imprisoned. Some of the best sons to India are at present in banishment. This is something different from mere petitioning. Thus are the people moved. The spirit generated in Bengal has spread in the North to the Punjab, and, in the South, to Cape Comorin.

Reader : Do you suggest any other striking result ?

Editor : The Partition has not only made a rift in the English ship, but has made it in ours also. Great events always produce great results. Our leaders are divided into two parties : the Moderates and the Extremists. These may be considered as the slow party and the impatient party. Some call the Moderates the timid Party, and the Extremists the bold party. All interpret the two words according to their preconceptions. This much is certain—that there has arisen an enmity between the two. The one distrusts the other, and imputes motives. At the time of the Surat Congress, there was almost a fight. I think that this division is not a good thing for the country, but I think also that such divisions will not last long. It all depends upon the leaders how long they will last.

What is Swaraj

Reader : I have now learnt what the Congress has done to make India one nation, how the Partition has caused an awakening, and how discontent and unrest have spread through the land. I would now like to know your views on Swaraj. I fear that our interpretation is not the same.

Editor : It is quite possible that we do not attach the same meaning to the them. You and I and all Indians are impatient to obtain Swaraj, but we are certainly not decided as to what it is. To drive the English out of India is a thought heard from many mouths, but it does not seem that many properly considered why it should be so. I must ask you a question. Do you think that it is necessary to drive away the English, if we get all we want ?

Reader. I should ask of them only one thing, that is : "Please leave our country." If after they have complied with this request, their withdrawal from India means that they are still in India. I should have no objection. Then we would understand that, in our language, the word "gone" is equivalent to "remained."

Editor : Well then, let us suppose that the English have retired. What will you do then ?

Reader : That question cannot be answered at this stage. The state after withdrawal will depend largely upon the manner of it. If as you assume, they retire, it seems to me we shall still keep their constitution, and shall carry on the Government. If they simply retire for the asking, we should have an army, etc., ready at hand. We should, therefore, have no difficulty in carrying on the Government.

Editor : You many think so : I do not. But I will not discuss the matter just now. I have to answer your question, and that I can do well by asking you several questions. Why do you want to drive away the English ?

Reader : Because India has become impoverished by their Government. They take away our money from year to year. The most important posts are reserved for themselves. We are kept in a state of slavery. They behave insolently towards us, and disregard our feelings.

Editor : If they do not take our money away, become gentle, and give us responsible posts, would you still consider their presence to be harmful ?

Reader : That question is useless. It is similar to the question whether there is any harm in associating with a tiger, if he changes his nature. Such a question is sheer waste of time. When a tiger changes his nature, Englishmen will change theirs. This is not possible ; and to believe it to be possible is contrary to human experience.

Editor : Supposing we get Self-Government similar to what the Canadians and the South Africans have, will it be good enough ?

Reader : That question also is useless. We may get it when we have the same powers; we shall then hoist our own flag. As is Japan, so must India be. We must own our navy, our army, and we must have our own splendour, and then will India's voice ring through the world.

Editor : You have well drawn the picture. In effect it means this : that we want English rule without the Englishman. You want the tiger's nature, but not the tiger ; that is to say, you would make India English, and when it becomes English, it will be called not Hindustan but Englistan. This is not the Swaraj that I want.

Reader : I have placed before you my idea of Swaraj as I think it should be. If the education we have received be of any use, if the works of Spencer, Mill and others be of any importance, and if the English Parliament be the mother of parliaments, I certainly think that we should copy the English people and this, to such an extent, 'that, just as they do not allow others to obtain a footing in their country, so we should not allow them or others to obtain it in ours. What they have done in their own country has not been done in any other country. It is, therefore, proper for us to import their institutions. But now I want to know your views.

Editor : There is need for patience. My views will develop of themselves in the course of this discourse. It is as difficult for me to understand the true nature of Swaraj as it seems to you to be easy. I shall, therefore, for the time being, content myself with endeavouring to show that what you call Swaraj is not truly Swaraj.

The Hindus and the Mahomedans

Editor : Your last question is a serious one, and yet, on careful consideration, it will be found to be easy of solution.

The question arises because of the presence of the railways, of the lawyers and of the doctors. We shall presently examine the last two. We have already considered the railways. I should, however, like to add that man is so made by nature as to require him to restrict his movements as far as his hands and feet will take him. If we did not rush about from place to place by means of railways and such other maddening conveniences, much of the confusion that arises would be obviated. Our difficulties are of our own creation. God set a limit to a man's locomotive ambition in the construction of his body. Man immediately proceeded to discover means of overriding the limit. God gifted man with intellect that he might know his Maker. Man abused it, so that he might forget his Maker. I am so constructed that I can only serve my immediate neighbours, but, in my conceit I pretend to have discovered that I must with my body serve every individual in the Universe. In thus attempting the imposible, man comes in contact with different natures, different religions, and is utterly confounded. According to this reasoning, it must be apparent to you that railways are a most dangerous institution. Man has there through gone further away from his Maker.

Reader : But I am impatient to hear your answer to my question. Has the introduction of Mahomedanism not unmade the nation ?

Editor : India cannot cease to be one nation because people belonging to different religions live in it. The introduction of foreigners does not necessarily destroy the nation, they merge in it. A country is one nation only when such a condition obtains in it. That country must have a faculty for assimilation. India has ever been such a country. In reality, there are as many religions as there are individuals, but those who are conscious of the spirit of nationality do not interfere with one another's religion. If they do, they are not fit to be considered a nation. If the Hindus believe that India should be peopled only by Hindus, they are living in a dreamland. The Hindus, the Mahmedans, the Parsees and the Christians who have made India their country are fellow-country men, and they will have to live in unity if only for their own interest. In no

part of the world are one nationality and one religion synonymous terms : nor has it ever been so in India.

Reader: But what about the inborn enmity between Hindus and Mahomedans ?

Editor: That phrase has been invented by our mutual enemy. When the Hindus and Mahomedans fought against one another, they certainly spoke in that strain. They have long since ceased to fight. How, then, can there be any inborn enmity ? Pray, remember this too, that we did not cease to fight only after British occupation. The Hindus flourished under Moslem sovereigns, and Moslems under the Hindu. Each party recognised that mutual fighting was suicidal, and that neither party would abandon its religion by force of arms. Both parties, therefore, decided to live in peace. With the English advent the quarrels re-commenced.

The proverbs you have quoted were coined when both were fighting ; to quote them now is obviously harmful. Should we not remember that many Hindus and Mahomedans own the same ancestors, and the same blood runs through their veins ? Do people become enemies because they change their religions ? Is the God of the Mahomedan different from the God of the Hindu ? Religions are different roads converging to the same point. What does it matter that we take different roads, so long as we reach the same goal ? Wherein is the cause for quarrelling ?

Moreover, there are deadly preverbs as between the followers of Shiva and those of Vishnu, yet nobody suggests that these two do not belong to the same nation. It is said that the Vedic religion is different from Jainism, but the followers of the respective faiths are not different nations. The fact is that we have become enslaved, and, therefore, quarrel and like to have our quarrels decided by a third party. There are Hindu iconoclasts as there are Mahomedan. The more we advance in true knowledge, the better we shall understand that we used not be at war with those whose religion we may not follow.

Reader: Now I would like to know your views about cow protection,

Editor: I myself respect the cow, that is, I look upon her with affectionate reverence. The cow is the protector of India, because, it being an agricultural country, is dependent on cow's progeny. She is a most useful animal in hundreds of ways. Our Mahomedan brethren will admit this.

But, just as I respect the cow so do I respect my fellow-men. A man is just as useful as a cow, no matter whether he be a Mahomedan or a Hindu Am I, then, to fight with or kill a Mahomedan in order to save a cow ? In doing so, I would become an enemy as well of the cow as of the Mahomedan. Therefore, the only method I know of protecting the cow is that I should approach my Mahomedan brother and urge him for the sake of the country to join me in protecting her. If he would not listen to me, I should let the cow go for the simple reason that the matter is beyond my ability. If I were overfull of pity for the cow, I should sacrifice my life to save her, but not take my brother's. This, I hold, is the law of our religion.

When men become obstinate, it is a difficult thing. If I pull one way my Moslem brother will pull another. If I put on a superior air, he will return the compliment. If I bow to him gently, he will do it much more so, and, if he does not, I shall not be considered to have done wrong in having bowed. When the Hindus became insistent, the killing of cows increased. In my opinion, cow protection societies may be considered cow-killing societies. It is a disgrace to us that we should need such societies. When we forgot how to protect cows, I suppose we needed such societies.

What am I to do when a blood-brother is on the point of killing a cow ? Am I to kill him, or to fall down at his feet and implore him ? If you admit that I should adopt the latter course, I must do the same to my Moslem brother.

Who protects the cow from destruction by Hindus when they cruelly ill-treat her ? Whoever reasons with the Hindus

when they mercilessly belabour the progeny of the cow with their sticks ? But this has not prevented us from remaining one nation.

Lastly, if it be true that the Hindus believe in the doctrine of non-killing and the Mahomedans do not, what, I pray, is the duty of the former ? It is not written that a follower of the religion of Ahimsa (non-killing) may kill a fellow-man. For him the way is straight. In order to save one being, he may not kill another. He can only plead—therein lies his sole duty.

But does every Hindu believe in Ahimsa ? Going to the root of the matter, not one man really practises such a religion, because we do destroy life. We are said to follow that religion because we want to obtain freedom from liability to kill any kind of life. Generally speaking, we may observe that many Hindus partake of meat and are not, therefore, followers of Ahimsa. It is, therefore, preposterous to suggest that the two cannot live together amicably because the Hindus believe in Ahimsa and the Mahomedans do not.

These thoughts are put into our minds by selfish and false religious teachers. The English put the finishing touch. They have a habit of writing history ; they pretend to study the manners and customs of all peoples. God has given us a limited mental capacity, but they usurp the function of the God-head and indulge in novel experiments. They write about their own researches in most laudatory terms and hypnotise us into believing them. We in our ignorance, then, fall at their feet.

Those who do not wish to misunderstand things may read up the Koran, and will find therein hundreds of passages acceptable to the Hindus ; and the Bhagavad Gita contains passages to which not a Mahomedan can take exception. Am I to dislike a Mahomedan because there are passages in the Koran I do not understand or like ? It takes two to make a quarrel. If I do not want to quarrel with a Mahomedan, the latter will be powerless to foist a quarrel on me, and, similarly, I should be powerless if a Mahomedan refuses his assistance

to quarrel with me. An arm striking the air will become disjointed. If everyone will try to understand the cores of his own religion and adhere to it, and will not allow false teachers to dictate to him, there will be no room left for quarrelling.

Reader: But will the English ever allow the two bodies to join hands ?

Editor: This question arises out of your timidity. It betrays our shallowness. If two brothers want to live in peace, is it possible for a third party to separate them ? If they were to listen to evil counsels, we would consider them to be foolish. Similarly, we Hindus and Mahomedans would have to blame our folly rather than the English, if we allowed them to put us asunder. A claypot would break through impact ; if not with one stone, then with another. The way to care the pot is not to keep it away from the danger-point, but to bake it so that no stone would break it. We have then to make our hearts of perfectly baked clay. Then we shall be steeled against all danger. This can be easily done by the Hindus. They are superior in numbers, they pretend that they are more educated, they are, therefore, better able to shield themselves from attack on their amicable relations with the Mahomedans.

There is mutual distrust between the two communities. The Mahomedans, therefore, ask for certain concessions from Lord Morley. Why should the Hindus oppose this ? If the Hindus desisted, the English would notice it, the Mahomedans would gradually begin to trust the Hindus, and brotherliness would be the outcome. We should be ashamed to take our quarrels to the English. Everyone can find out for himself that the Hindus can lose nothing by desisting. That man who has inspired confidence in another has never lost anything in this world.

I do not suggest that the Hindus and the Mahomedans will never fight. Two brothers living together often do so. We shall sometimes have our heads broken. Such a thing ought not to be necessary, but all men are not equi-minded. When

people are in a rage, they do many foolish things. These we have to put up with. But, when we do quarrel, we certainly do not want to engage counsel and to resort to English or any law-courts. Two men fight ; both have their heads broken, or one only. How shall a third party distribute justice amongst them ? Those who fight may expect to be injured.

How can India Become Free

Reader: I appreciate your views about civilisation. I will have to think over them. I cannot take in all at once. What, then, holding the views you do, would you suggest for freeing India.

Editor: I do not expect my views to be accepted all of a sudden. My duty is to place them before readers like yourself. Time can be trusted to the rest. We have already examined the conditions for freeing India, but we have done so indirectly ; we will now do so directly. It is a world-known maxim that the removal of the cause of a disease results in the removal of the disease itself. Similarly, if the cause of India's slavery be removed, India can become free.

Reader: If Indian civilisation is as you say, the best of all, how do you account for India's slavery ?

Editor: This civilisation is unquestionably the best, but it is to observed that all civilisations have been on their trial. That civilisation which is permanent outlives it. Because the sons of India were found wanting, its civilisation has been placed in jeopardy. But its strength is to be seen in its ability to survive the shock. Moreover, the whole of India is not touched. Those alone who have been affected by western civilisation have become enslaved. We measure the universe by our own miserable foot-rule. When we are slaves, we think that the whole universe is enslaved. Because we are in an abject condition, we think that the whole of India is in that condition. As a matter of fact, it is not so, but it is as well to impute our slavery to the whole of India. But if we bear in mind the above fact, we can see that, if we become

free, India is free. And in this thought you have a definition of Swaraj. It is Swaraj when we learn to rule ourselves. It is, therefore, in the palm of our hands. Do not consider this Swaraj to be like a dream. Hence, there is no idea of sitting still. The Swaraj that I wish to picture before you and me is such that, after we have once realised it, we will endeavour to the end of our life-time to persuade others to do likewise. But such Swaraj has to be experienced by each one for himself. One drowning man will never save another. Slaves ourselves, it would be a mere pretention to think of freeing others. Now you will have seen that it is not necessary for us to have as our goal the expulsion of the English. If the English become Indianised, we can accommodate them If they wish to remain in India along with their civilisation, there is no room for them. It lies with us to bring about such a state of things.

Reader: It is impossible that Englishmen should ever become Indianised.

Editor: To say that is equivalent to saying that the English have no humanity in them. And it is really beside the point whether they become so or not. If we keep our own house in order, only those who are fit to live in it will remain. Others will leave of their own accord. Such things occur within the experience of all of us.

Reader: But it has not occurred in history.

Editor: To believe that what has not occurred in history will not occur at all is to argue disbelief in the dignity of man. At any rate, it behoves us to try what appeals to our reason. All countries are not similarly conditioned. The condition of India is unique. Its strength is immeasurable. We need not, therefore, refer to the history of other countries. I have drawn attention to the fact that, when other civilisations have succumbed, the Indian has survived many a shock.

Reader: I cannot follow this. There seems little doubt that we shall have to expel the English by force of arms. So long as they are in the country, we cannot rest. One of our poets says that slaves cannot even dream of happiness. We are day

by day becoming weakened owing to the presence of the English. Our greatness is gone; our people look like terrified men. The English are in the country like a blight which we must remove by every means.

Editor: In your excitement, you have forgotten all we have been considering. We brought the English, and we keep them. Why do you forget that our adoption of their civilisation makes their presence in India at all possible? Your hatred against them ought to be transferred to their civilisation But let us assume that we have to drive away the English by fighting, how is that to be done.

Reader: In the same way as Italy did it. What it was possible for Mazzini and Garibaldi to do, is possible for us. You cannot deny that they were very great men.

Passive Resistance

Reader : Is there any historical evidence as to the success of what you have called soul-force or truth-force? No instance seems to have happened of any nation having risen through soul-force. I still think that the evil-doers will not cease doing evil without physical punishment.

Editor : The poet Tulsidas has said : "Of religion, pity or love is the root, as egotism of the body. Therefore, we should not abandon pity so long as we are alive." This appears to me to be a scientific truth. I believe in it as much as I believe in two and two being four. The force of love is the same as the force of the soul or truth. We have evidence of its working at every step. The universe would disappear without the existence of that force. But you ask for historical evidence. It is, therefore, necessary to know what history means. The Gujarati equivalent means : "It so happened." If that is the meaning of history, it is possible to give copious evidence. But, if it means the doings of kings and emperors, there can be no evidence of soul-force or passive resistance in such history. You cannot expect silver ore in a tin-mine. History, as we know it, is a record of the wars of the world, and so there is a

proverb among Englishmen that a nation which has no history, that is, no wars, is a happy nation. How kings played, how they became enemies of one another and how they murdered one another is found accurately recorded in history, and, if this were all that had happened in the world it would have been ended long ago. If the story of the universe had commenced with wars, not a man would have been found alive to-day. Those people who have been warred against have disappeared, as, for instance, the natives of Australia, of whom hardly a man was left alive by the intruders. Mark, please, that these natives did not use soul-force in self-defence, and it does not require much foresight to know that the Australians will share the same fate as their victims. "Those that wield the sword shall perish by the sword." With us, the proverb is that professional swimmers will find a watery grave.

The fact that there are so many men still alive in the world shows that it is based not on the force of arms but on the force of truth or love. Therefore the greatest and most unimpeachable evidence of the success of this force is to be found in the fact that, in spite of the wars of the world, it still lives on.

Thousands, indeed tens of thousands, depend for their existence on a very active working of this force. Little quarrels of millions of families in their daily lives disappear before the exercise of this force. Hundreds of nations live in peace. History does not, and cannot, take note of this fact. History is really a record of every interruption of the even working of the force of love or of the soul. Two brothers quarrel ; one of them repeats and re-awakens the love that was lying dormant in him ; the two again begin to live in peace ; nobody takes note of this. But, if the two brothers, through the intervention of solicitors or some other reason, take up arms or go to law—which is another form of the exhibition of brute force,—their doings would be immediately noticed in the press, they would be the talk of their neighbours, and would probably go down to history. And what is true of families and communities is true of nations. There is no reason to believe that there is one law for families, and another for nations. History, then, is a record

of an interruption of the course of nature. Soul-force, being natural, is not noted in history.

Reader : According to what you say, it is plain that instances of the kind of passive resistance are not to be found in history. It is necessary to understand this passive resistance more fully. It will be better, therefore, if you enlarge upon it.

Editor : Passive resistance is a method of securing rights by personal suffering ; it is the reverse of resistance by arms. When I refuse to do a thing that is repugnant to my conscience, I use soul-force. For instance, the government of the day has passed a law which is applicable to me. I do not like it. If, by using violence, I force the government to repeal the law, I am employing what may be termed body-force. If I do not obey the law, and accept the penalty for its breach, I use soul-force. It involves sacrifice of self.

Everybody admits that sacrifice of self is infinitely superior to the sacrifice of others. Moreover, if this kind of force is used in a cause that is unjust, only the person using it suffers. He does not make others suffer for his mistakes. Men have before now done many things which were subsequently found to have been wrong. No man can claim to be absolutely in the right, or that a particular thing is wrong, because he thinks so, but it is wrong for him so long as that is his deliberate judgment. It is, therefore, meet that he should not do that which he knows to be wrong, and suffer the consequence whatever it may be. This is the key to the use of soul-force.

Reader : You would then disregard laws—this is rank disloyalty. We have always been considered a law-abiding nation. You seem to be going even beyond the extremists. They say that we must obey the laws that have been passed, but that, if the laws be bad, we must drive out the law-givers even by force.

Editor : Whether I go beyond them or whether I do not is a matter of no consequence to either of us. We simply want to find out what is right and to act accordingly. The real mean-

ing of the statement that we are a law-abiding nation is that we are passive resisters. When we do not like certain laws, we do not break the heads of law-givers, but we suffer and do not submit to the laws. That we should obey laws whether good or bad is a new-fangled notion. There was no such thing in former days. The people disregarded those laws they did not like, and suffered the penalties for their breach. It is contrary to our manhood, if we obey laws repugnant to our conscience. Such teaching is opposed to religion, and means slavery. If the Government were to ask us to go about without any clothing, should we do so? If I were a passive resister, I would say to them that I would have nothing to do with their law. But we have so forgotten ourselves and become so compliant, that we do not mind any degrading law.

A man who has realised his manhood, who fears only God, will fear no one else. Man-made laws are not necessarily binding on him. Even the government does not expect any such thing from us. They do not say: "You must do such and such a thing," but they say: "If you do not do it, we will punish you." We are sunk so low, that we fancy that it is our duty and our religion to do what the law lays down. If man will only realise that it is unmanly to obey laws that are unjust, no man's tyranny will enslave him. This is the key to self-rule or home-rule.

It is a superstition and an ungodly thing to believe that an act of a majority binds a minority. Many examples can be given in which acts of majorities will be found to have been wrong, and those of minorities to have been right. All reforms owe their origin to the initiation of minorities in opposition to majorities. If among a band of robbers, a knowledge of robbing is obligatory, is a pious man to accept the obligation? So long as the superstition that men should obey unjust laws exists, so long will their slavery exist. And a passive resister alone can remove such a superstition.

To use brute-force, to use gun-powder is contrary to passive resistance, for it means that we want our opponent to do by force that which we desire but he does not. And, if such a use

of force is justifiable, surely he is entitled to do likewise by us. And so we should never come to an agreement. We may simply fancy, like the blind horse moving in a circle round a mill, that we are making progress. Those who believe that they are not bound to obey laws which are repugnant to their conscience have only the remedy of passive resistance open to them. Any other must lead to disaster.

Reader : From what you say, I deduce that passive resistance is a splendid weapon of the weak, but that, when they are strong, they may take up arms.

Editor : This is gross ignorance. Passive resistance, that is, soul-force, is matchless. It is superior to the force of arms. How, then, can it be considered only a weapon of the weak ? Physical-force men are strangers to the courage that is requisite in a passive resister. Do you believe that a coward can ever disobey a law that he dislikes ? Extremists are considered to be advocates of brute force. Why do they, then, talk about obeying laws ? I do not blame them. They can say nothing else. When they succeed in driving out the English, and they themselves become governors, they will want you and me to obey their laws. And that is a fitting thing for their constitution. But a passive resister will say he will not obey a law that is against his conscience, even though he may be blown to pieces at the mouth of a cannon.

What do you think ? Wherein is courage required—in blowing others to pieces from behind a cannon or with a smiling face to approach a cannon and to be blown to pieces ? Who is the true warrior—he who keeps death always as a bosom-friend or he who controls the death of others ? Believe me that a man devoid of courage and manhood can never be a passive resister.

This, however, I will admit : that even a man weak in body is capable of offering this resistance. One man can offer it just as well as millions. Both men and women can indulge in it. It does not require the training of an army ; it needs no Jiu-jitsu. Control over the mind is alone necessary, and, when

that is attained, man is free like the king of the forest, and his very glance withers the enemy.

Passive resistance is an all-sided sword ; it can be used anyhow : it blesses him who uses it and him against whom it is used. Without drawing a drop of blood, it produces far-reaching results. It never rusts, and cannot be stolen. Competition between passive resisters does not exhaust. The sword of passive resistance does not require a scabbard. It is strange indeed that you should consider such a weapon to be a weapon merely of the weak.

Reader : You have said that passive resistance is a speciality of India. Have cannons never been used in India ?

Editor : Evidently, in your opinion, India means its few princes. To me, it means its teeming millions, on whom depends the existence of its princes and our own.

Kings will always use their kingly weapons. To use force is bred in them. They want to command, but those who have to obey commands, do not want guns ; and these are in a majority throughout the world. They have to learn either body-force or soul-force. Where they learn the former, both the rulers and the ruled become like so many mad men, but, where they learn soul-force, the commands of the rulers do not go beyond the point of their swords, for true men disregard unjust commands. Peasants haver never been subdued by the sword, and never will be. They do not know the use of the sword, and they are not frightened by the use of it by others. That nation is great which rests its head upon death as its pillow. Those who defy death are free from all fear. For those who are labouring under the delusive charms of brute force, this picture is not overdrawn. The fact is that in India, the nation at large has generally used passive resistance in all departments of life. We cease to co-operate with our rulers when they displease us. This is passive resistance.

I remember an instance when, in a small principality, the viilagers were offended by some command issued by the prince.

The former immediately began vacating the village. The prince became nervous, apologised to his subjects and withdrew his command. Many such instances can be found in India. Real home rule is possible only where passive resistance is the guiding force of the people. Any other rule is foreign rule.

Reader : Then you will say that it is not at all necessary for us to train the body ?

Editor : I will certainly not say any such thing. It is difficult to become a passive resister, unless the body is trained. As a rule, the mind, residing in a body that has become weakened by pampering, is also weak, and, where there is no strength of mind, there can be no strength of soul. We will have to improve our physique by getting rid of infant marriages and luxurious living. If I were to ask a man having a shattered body to face a cannon's mouth, I would make of myself a laughing-stock.

Reader : From what you say, then, it would appear that it is not a small thing to become a passive resister, and, if that is so, I would like you to explain how a man may become a passive resister.

Editor : To become a passive resister is easy enough, but it is also equally difficult. I have known a lad of fourteen years become a passive resister ; I have known also sick people doing likewise ; and I have also known physically strong and otherwise happy people being unable to take up passive resistance. After a great deal of experience, it seems to me that those who want to become passive resisters for the service of the country have to observe perfect chastity, adopt poverty, follow truth, and cultivate fearlessness.

Chastity is one of the greatest disciplines without which the mind cannot attain requisite firmness. A man who is unchaste loses stamina, becomes emasculated and cowardly. He whose mind is given over to animal passions is not capable of any great effort. This can be proved by innumerable instances. What, then, is a married person to do, is the question that arises naturally ; and yet it need not. When a husband and

wife gratify the passions, it is no less an animal indulgence, on that account. Such an indulgence, except for perpetuating the race, is strictly prohibited. But a passive resister has to avoid even that very limited indulgence, because he can have no desire for progeny. A married man, therefore, can observe perfect chastity. This subject is not capable of being treated at greater length. Several questions arise: How is one to carry one's wife with one? What are her rights, and such other questions? Yet those who wish to take part in a great work are bound to solve these puzzles.

Just as there is necessity for chastity, so is there for poverty. Pecuniary ambition and passive resistance cannot well go together. Those who have money are not expected to throw it away, but they are expected to be indifferent about it. They must be prepared to lose every penny rather than give up passive resistance.

Passive resistance has been described in the course of our discussion as truth-force. Truth, therefore, has necessarily to be followed, and that at any cost. In this connection, academic questions such as whether a man may not lie in order to save a life, etc. arise, but these questions occur only to those who wish to justify lying. Those who want to follow truth every time are not placed in such a quandary, and, if they are, they are still saved from a false position.

Passive resistance cannot proceed a step without fearlessness. Those alone can follow the path of passive resistance who are free from fear, whether as to their possessions, false honour, their relatives, the government, bodily injuries, death.

These observations are not to be abandoned in the belief that they are difficult. Nature has implanted in the human breast ability to cope with any difficulty or suffering that may come to man unprovoked. These qualities are worth having even for those who do not wish to serve the country. Let there be no mistake as those who want to train themselves in the use of arms are also obliged to have these qualities more or less. Everybody does not become a warrior for the wish. A would-be warrior will have to observe chastity, and to be satisfied with

poverty as his lot. A warrior without fearlessness cannot be conceived of. It may be thought that he would not need to be exactly truthful, but that quality follows real fearlessness. When a man abandons truth, he does so owing to fear in some shape or form. The above four attributes, then, need not frighten any one. It may be as well here to note that a physical-force man has to have many other useless qualities which a passive resister never needs. And you will find that whatever extra effort a swordsman needs is due to lack of fearlessness. If he is an embodiment of the latter, the sword will drop from his hand that very moment. He does not need its support. One who is free from hatred requires no sword. A man with a stick suddenly came face to face with a lion, and instinctively raised his weapon in self-defence. The man saw that he had only prated about fearlessness when there was none in him. That moment he dropped the stick, and found himself free from all fear.

LOYALTY TO THE BRITISH EMPIRE*

When the learned Advocate-General came to me and asked me to propose this toast, I must confess that I was taken aback a little. I don't think he noticed it himself, but I make that confession to you. I felt that I was invited to be present here as at one time I belonged to the profession to which you or most of you belong and as I happen to be in Madras, but that I would be allowed to remain a silent spectator of what was going on here. But when he mentioned the thing I did not hesitate to say, "Yes, I shall be pleased to speak to this toast." During my three months' touring in India as also in South Africa, I have been often questioned how I, a determined opponent of modern civilization and an avowed patriot, could reconcile myself to loyalty to the British Empire of which India was such a large part, how it was possible for me to find it consistent that India and England could work together for mutual benefit. It gives me the greatest pleasure this evening at this very great and important gathering to re-declare my loyalty to this British Empire and my loyalty is based upon

*Speech at Law Dinner, Madras, April 24, 1915.

very selfish grounds. As a passive resister I discovered that I could not have that free scope which I had under the British Empire. I know that a passive resister has to make good his claim to passive resistance, no matter under what circumstances he finds ideals with which I have fallen in love, and one of those ideals is that every subject of the British Empire has the freest scope possible for his energies and efforts and whatever he thinks is due to his conscience. I think that this is true of the British Empire as it is not true of any other Governments that we see. I feel as you have perhaps known that I am no lover of any Government and I have more than once said that that Government is best which governs least, and I have found that it is possible for me to be governed least under the British Empire. Hence my loyalty to the British Empire. And may I, before I sit down and ask you to drink to the prosperity of the British Empire, remind you of one singular incident that happened during this campaign in far-off South Africa. General Beyers, the trusted Commander of one of the Forces of the British Empire, rose against that Empire in open rebellion. It was only possible for him under that Empire and that Empire alone, not to have himself shot at sight. General Smuts wrote to him in a memorable letter that he himself was at one time a rebel. He wrote to General Beyers that it was only under the British Empire that it was possible for him to save his life. Hence my loyalty to the British Empire.

SPIRITUALIZING POLITICS*

Madras has well-nigh exhausted the English vocabulary in using adjectives of virtue with reference to my wife and myself and, if may be called upon to give an opinion as to where I have been smothered with kindness, love and where attention, I would have to say ; it is Madras. But, as I have said so often, I believed it of Madras. So it is no wonder to me that you are lavishing all these kindnesses with unparalleled generosity, and now the worthy President of the Servants of India Society—under which Society I am going through a period of probation—has, if I may say so, capped it all. Am I worthy of these

*Speech at Y.M.C.A., Madras, April 27, 1915.

things ? My answer from the innermost recesses of my heart is an emphatic "No". But I have come to India to become worthy of every adjective that you may use, and all my life will certainly be dedicated to prove worthy of them, if I am to be a worthy servant.

And so it is that you have sung that beautiful national song, on hearing which all of us sprang to our feet. The poet has lavished all the adjectives that he possibly could to describe Mother India. He describes Mother India as sweet-smelling, sweet-speaking, fragrant, all-powerful, all-good, truthful, a land flowing with milk and honey, and having ripe fields, fruits and grains, and inhabited by a race of men of whom we have only a picture in the great Golden Age. He pictures to us a land which shall embrace in its possession the whole of the world, the whole of humanity by the might or right not physical power but of soul-power, Can we sing that hymn ? I ask myself, "Can I, by any right, spring to my feet when I listen to that song ?" The poet no doubt gave us a picture for our realization the words of which simply remain prophetic, and it is for you, the hope of India, to realize every word that the poet has said in describing this Motherland of ours. Today I feel that these adjectives are very largely misplaced in his description of the Motherland, and it is for you and for me to make good the claim that the poet has advanced on behalf of his Motherland.

You—the students of Madras as well as students all over India—are you receiving an education which will make you worthy to realize that ideal and which will draw the best out of you, or is it an education which has become a factory for making Government employees or clerks in commercial offices ? Is the goal of the education that yon are receiving that of mere employment whether in the Government departments or other departments ? If that be the goal of your education, if that is the goal that you have set before yourselves I feel and I fear that the vision which the poet pictured for himself is far from being realized. As you have heard me say perhaps, or as you have read, I am and have been a determined opponent of modern civilisation. I want you to

turn your eyes today upon what is going on in Europe and if you have come to to conclusion that Europe is today groaning under the heels of modern civilization, then you and your elders will have to think twice before you can emulate that civilization in our Motherland. But I have been told : "How can we help it, seeing that our rulers bring that culture to our Motherland ?" Do not make any mistake about it at all. I do not for one moment believe that only give you what is stirring me to my very depths. On the authority of my experiences in South Africa, I claim that your countrymen who had not that modern culture but who had that strength of the rights of old, who have inherited the tapaschary a performed by the rights, without having known a single word of English literature and without knowing anything whatsoever of the present modern culture, they are able to rise to their full height. And what has been possible for the uneducated and illiterate countrymen of ours in South Africa is ten times possible for you and for me today in this sacred land of ours. May that be your privilege and may that my privilege.

TURNING THE SEARCHLIGHT INWARD*

Friends, I wish to tender my humble apology for the long delay that took place before I was able to reach this place. And you will readily accept the apology where I tell you that I am not responsible for the delay nor is any human agency responsible for it. The fact is that I am like an animal on show and my keepers in their over-kindness always manage to neglect a necessary chapter in this life and that is pure accident. In this case, they did not provide for the series of accidents that happened to us—to me, my keepers and my carriers Hence this delay.

Friends, under the influence of the matchless eloquence of the lady (Mrs. Besant) who has just sat down, pray, do not believe that our University has become a finished product and that all the young men who are to come to the University that has to rise and come into existence, have also come and

*Speech at Banaras Hindu University, February 6, 1916.

returned from it finished citizens of a great empire. Do not go away with any such impression and if you the student world to which my remarks are supposed to be addressed this evening, consider for one moment that the spiritual life, for which this country is noted and for which this country has no rival, can be transmitted through the lip, pray, believe me you are wrong. You will never be able merely through the lip to give the message that India, I hope, will one day deliver to the world. I myself have been "fed up" with speeches and lectures. I accept the lectures that have been delivered here during the last two days from this category because they were necessary. But I do venture to suggest to you that we have now reached almost the end of our resources in speech-making, and it is not enough that our ears are feasted, that our eyes are feasted, but it is necessary that our hearts have got to be touched and that our hands and feet have got to be moved. We have been told during the last two days how necessary it is, if we are to retain our hold upon the simplicity of Indian character, that our hands and feet should move in unison with our hearts. But this is only by way of preface. I wanted to say it is a matter of deep humiliation and shame for us that I am compelled this evening under the shadow of this great college, in this sacred city, to address my countrymen in a language that is foreign to me. I know that if I was appointed an examiner to examine all those who have been attending during these two days this series of lectures, most of those who might be examined upon these lectures would fail. And why? Because they have not been touched. I am present at the sessions of the great Congress in the month of December. There was a much vaster audience, and will you believe me when I tell you that the only speeches that touched that huge audience in Bombay were the speeches that were delivered in Hindustani? In Bombay, mind you, not in Banaras where everybody speaks Hindi. But between the vernaculars of the Bombay Presidency on the one hand and Hindi on the other, no such great dividing line exists as there does between English and the sister languages of India; and the Congress audience was better able to follow the speakers in Hindi. I am hoping that this University

will see to it that the youths who come to it will receive their instruction through the medium of their vernaculars. Our language is the reflection of ourselves, and if you tell me that our languages are too poor to express the best thought, then I say that the sooner we are wiped out of existence, the better for us. It there a man who dreams that English can ever become the national language of India? (Cries of "Never".) Why this handicap on the nation? Just consider for one moment what an unequal race our lads have to run with every English lad. I had the privilege of a close conversation with some Poona professors. They assured me that every Indian youth, because he reached his knowledge through the English language, lost at least six precious years of life. Multiply that by the number of students turned out by our schools and colleges and find out for yourselves how many thousand years have been lost to the nation. The charge against us is that we have no initiative. How can we have any if we are to devote the precious years of our life to the mastery of a foreign tongue? We fail in this attempt also. Was it possible for any speaker yesterday and today to impress his audience as was possible for Mr. Higgingbotham? It was not that fault of the previous speakers that they could not engage the audience. They had more than substance enough for us in their addresses. But their addresses could not go home to us. I have heard it said that after all it is English-educated India which is leading and which is doing all the things for the nation. It would be monstrous if it were otherwise The only education we receive is English education. Surely we must show something for it. But suppose that we had been receiving the past fifty years education through our vernaculars, what should we have today? We should have today a free India, we should have our educated men not as if they were foreigners in their own land but speaking to the heart of the nation, they would be working amongst the poorest of the poor, and whatever they would have gained during the past 50 years would be a heritage for the nation. Today even our wives are not the sharers in our best thought. Look at Professor Bose and Professor Ray and their brilliant researches. Is it not a shame that their researches are not the common property of the masses?

Let us now turn to another subject.

The Congress has passed resolution about self-government and I have no doubt that the All-India Congress Committee and the Moslem League will do their duty and come forward with some tangible suggestions. But I for one must frankly confess that I am not so much interested in what they will be able to produce as I am interested in anything that the student world is going to produce or the masses are going to produce. No paper contribution will ever give us self government. No amount of speeches will ever make us fit for self-government. It is only our conduct that will fit us for it. And how are we trying to govern ourselves? I want to think audibly this evening. I do not want to make a speech and if you find me this evening speaking without reserve, please, consider that you are only sharing the thoughts of a man who allows himself to think audibly, and if you think that I seem to transgress the limits that courtesy imposes upon me, pardon me for the liberty I may be taking. I visited the Viswanath temple last evening and as I was walking through those lanes, these were the thoughts that touched me. If a stranger dropped from above on this great temple and he had to consider what we as Hindus were, would he not be justified in condemning us? Is not this great temple a reflection of our own character? I speak feelingly as a Hindu. Is it right that the lanes of our sacred temple should be as dirty as they are? The houses round about are built anyhow. The lanes are tortuous and narrow. If even our temples are not models of roominess and cleanliness, what can our self-government be? Shall our temples be abodes of holiness, cleanliness and peace as soon as the English have retired from India, either of their own pleasure or by compulsion, bag and baggage?

I entirely agree with the President of the Congress that before we think of self-government, we shall have to do the necessary plodding. In every city there are two divisions, the cantonment and the city proper. The city mostly is a stinking den. But we are people unused to city life. But if we want city life, we cannot reproduce the easy-going hamlet

life. It is not comforting to think that people walk about the streets of Indian Bombay under the perpetual fear of dwellers in the storeyed buildings spitting upon them. I do a great deal of railway travelling. I observe the difficulty of third-class passengers. But the Railway Administration is by no means to blame for all their hard lot. We do not know the elementary laws of cleanliness. We spit anywhere on the carriage floor, irrespective of the thought that it is often used as sleeping space. We do not trouble ourselves as to how we use it ; the result is indescribable filth in the compartment. The so-called better-class passengers overawe their less fortunate brethren. Among them I have seen the student world also. Sometimes they behave no better. They can speak English and they have worn Norfolk jackets and therefore claim the right to force their way in and command seating accommodation. I have turned the searchlight all over and as you have given me the privilege of speaking to you, I am laying my heart bare. Surely we must set these things right in our progress towards self-government. I now introduce you to another scene. His Highness the Maharaja who presided yesterday over our deliberations spoke about the poverty of India. Other speakers laid great stress upon it. But what did we witness in the great pandal in which the foundation ceremony was performed by the Viceroy ? Certainly a most gorgeous show, an exhibition of jewellery which made a splendid feast for the eyes of the greatest jeweller who chose to come from Pari. I compare with the richly bedecked noblemen the millions of the poor. And I feel like saying to these noblemen : "There is no salvation for India unless you strip yourselves of this jewellery and hold it in trust for your countrymen in India." I am sure it is not the desire of the King-Emperor or Lord Hardinge that in order to show the truest loyalty to our King-Emperor, it is necessary for us to ransack our jewellery-boxes and to appear bedecked from top to toe. I would undertake at the peril of my life to bring to you a message from King George himself that he expects nothing of the kind. Sir, whenever I hear of a great palace rising in any great city of India, be it in British India or be it in India which is ruled by our great chiefs, I become jealous at once and I say ; "Oh, it is

the money that has come from the agriculturists." Our 75 per cent of the population are agriculturists and Mr. Higginbotham told us last night in his own felicitous language that they are the men who grow two blades of grass in the place of one. But there cannot be much spirit of a self-government about us if we take away or allow others to take away from them almost the whole of the results of their labour. Our salvation can only come through the farmer. Neither the lawyers, nor the doctors, nor the rich landlords are going to secure it.

Now, last but not the least, it is my bounden duty to refer to what agitated our minds during these two or three days. All of us have had many anxious moments while the Viceroy was going through the streets of Banaras. There were detectives stationed in many places. We are horrified. We asked ourselves: "Why this distrust? Is it not better that even Lord Hardinge should die than live a living death?" But a representative of a mighty Sovereign may not. He might find it necessary even to live a living death. But why was it necessary to impose these detectives on us? We may foam, we may fret, we may resent but let us not forget that India of today in her impatience has produced an army of anarchists. I myself am an anarchist, but of another type. But there is a class of anarchists amongst us, and if I was able to reach this class, I would say to them that their anarchism has no room in India if India is to conquer the conqueror. It is a sign of fear. If we tr st and fear God, we shall have to fear no one, not Maharajas, not Viceroys, not the detectives, not even King George. I honour the anarchist for his love of the country. I honour him for his bravery in being willing to die for his country; but I ask him: Is killing honourable? Is the dagger of an assasin a fit precursor of an honourable death? I deny it. There is no warrant for such methods in any scriptures. If I found it necessary for the salvation of India that the English should retire, that they should be driven out, I would not hesitate to declare that they would have to go, and I hope I would be prepared to die in defence of that belief. That would, in my opinion, be an honourable death. The bomb-thrower creates secret plots, is afraid to come out into the open, and when

caught pays the penalty of misdirected zeal. I have been told: "Had we not done this, had some people not thrown bombs, we should never have gained what we have got with reference to the partition movement." (Mrs. Besant: Please stop it). This was what I said in Bengal when Mr. Lyon presided at the meeting. I think what I am saying is necessary. If I am told to stop I shall obey. (Turning to the Chairman) I await your orders. If you consider that by my speaking as I am, I am not serving the country and the empire, I shall certainly stop. (Cries of "Go on".) (The Chairman: Please explain your object.) I am explaining my object. I am simply (another interruption). My friends, please do not resent this interruption. If Mrs. Besant this evening suggests that I should stop, she does so because she loves India so well, and she considers that I am erring in thinking audibly before you young men. But even so, I simply say this that I want to purge India of the atmosphere of suspicion on either side; If we are to reach our goal, we should have an empire which is to be based upon mutual love and mutual trust. Is it not better that we talk under shadow of the this college than that we should be talking irresponsibly in our homes? I consider that it is much better that we talk these things openly. I have done so with excellent results before now. I know that there is nothing that the students are not discussing. There is nothing that the students do not know. I am therefore turning the searchlight towards ourselves. I hold the name of my country so dear to me that I exchange these thoughts with you and submit to you that there is no reason for anarchism in India. Let us frankly and openly say whatever we want to say to our rulers and face the consequences if what we have to say does not please them. But let us not abuse. I was talking the other day to a member of the much-abused Civil Service. I have not very much in common with the members of that Service, but I could not help admiring the manner in which he was speaking to me. He said: "Mr. Gandhi, do you for one moment suppose that all we Civil Servants are a bad lot, that we want to oppress the people whom we have come to govern?" "No," I said. "Then, if you get an opportunity put in a word for the much-abused Civil Service." And I am here to put in that word. Yes; many members of the Indian Civil Service are most decidedly

overbearing ; they are tyrannical, at times thoughtless. Many other adjectives may be used. I grant all these things and I grant also that after having lived in India for a certain number of years, some of them become somewhat degraded. But what does that signify. They were gentlemen before they came here. and if they have lost some of the moral fibre, it is a reflection upon ourselves. (Cries of "No".) Just think out for yourselves. if a man who was good yesterday has become bad after having come in contact with me. Is he responsible that he has deteriorated or am I ? The atmosphere of sycophancy and falsity that surrounds them on their coming to India demoralizes them as it would many of us. It is well to take the blame sometimes. If we are to receive self-government, we shall have to take it. We shall never be granted self government. Look at the history of the British Empire and the British nation ; freedom-loving as it is, it will not be a party to giving freedom to a people who will not take it themselves Learn your lesson if you wish to from the Boer War. Those who were enemies of that empire only a few years ago have now become friends.*

THE CULT OF SWADESHI**

It was not without much diffidence that I undertook to speak to you in all. And I was hard put to it in the selection of my subject. I have chosen a very delicate and difficult subject. It is delicate because of the peculiar views I hold upon swadeshi, and it is difficult because I have not that command of language which is necessary for giving adequate expression to my thoughts I know that I may rely upon your indulgnce for the many shortcomings you will no doubt find in my address, the more so when I tell you that there is nothing in when I am about to say that I am not either already practising or am not preparing to practise to the best of my ability. It encourages me to observe that last month you devoted a week to prayer in the place of an address. I have earnestly

*At this point there was an interruption and there was a movement on the platform to leave ; the speech therefore ended abruptly.

**Speech at the missinoary conference Madras, February 14, 1916.

prayed that what I am about to say may bear fruit and I know that you will bless my words with a similar prayer.

After much thinking, I have arrived at a definition of swadeshi that perhaps best illustrates my meaning. Swadeshi is that spirit in us which restricts us to the use and service of our immediate surroundings to the exclusion of the more remote. Thus, as for religion, in order to satisfy the requirements of the definition. I must restrict myself to my ancestral religion. That is the use of my immediate religious surroundings If I find it defective, I should serve it by purging it of its defects. In the domain of politics, I should make use of the indigenous institutions and serve them by curing them of their proved defects. In that of economics, I should use only things that are produced by my immediate neighbours and serve those industries by making them efficient and complete where they might be found wanting. It is suggested that such swadeshi, if reduced to practice, will lead to the millennium. And as we do not abandon our pursuit after the millennium because we do not expect quite to reach it within our time, so may we not abandon swadeshi even though it may not be fully attained for generations to come.

Let us briefly examine three branches of swadeshi as sketched above. Hinduism has become a conservative religion and therefore a mighty force because of the swadeshi spirit underlying it. It is the most tolerant because it is non-proselytizing and it is as capable of expansion today as it has been found to be in the past. It has succeeded not in driving, as I think it has been erroneously held, but in absorbing Buddhism. By reason of the swadeshi spirit, a Hindu refuses to change his religion not necessarily because he considers it to be the best, but because he knows that he can complement it by introducing reforms. And what I have said about Hinduism is, I suppose, true of the other great faiths of the world, only it is held that it is specially so in the case of Hinduism. But here comes the point I am labouring to reach. If there is any substance in what I have said, will not the great missionary bodies of India, to whom we owe a deep debt of gratitude for

what they have done and are doing, do still better and serve the spirit of Christianity better, by dropping the goal of proselytizing but continuing their philanthropic work ? I hope you will not consider this to be an impertinence on my part. I make the suggestion in all sincerity and with due humility. Moreover, I have some claim upon your attention. I have endeavoured to study the Bible. I consider it as part of my scriptures. The spirit of Sermon on the Mount competes almost on equal terms with the *Bhagavad Gita* for the domination of my heart. I yield to no Christian in the strength of devotion with which I sing, "Lead, Kindly Light" and several other hymns of a similar nature. I have come under the influence of noted Christian missionaries belonging to different denominations. And I enjoy to this day the privilege of friendship with some of them. You will perhaps therefore allow that I have offered the above suggestion not as a biased Hindu but as a humble and impartial student of religion with great leanings towards Christianity. May it not be that the "Go Ye All the World" message has been somewhat narrowly interpreted and the spirit of it missed ? It will not be denied, I speak from experience, that many of the conversions are only so called. In some cases, the appeal has gone not to the heart but to the stomach. And in every case, a conversion leaves a sore behind it which, I venture to think, is avoidable. Quoting again from experience, a new birth, a change of heart, is perfectly possible in every one of the great faiths. I know I am now treading upon thin ice. But I do not apologize, in closing this part of my subject, for saying that the frightful outrage that is just going on in Europe, perhaps, shows that the message of Nazareth, the Son of Peace, has been little understood in Europe, and that light upon it may have to be thrown from the East.

I have sought your help in religious matters, which it is yours to give in a special sense. But I make bold to seek it even in political matters. I do not believe that religion has nothing to do with politics. The latter divorced from religion is like a corpse only fit to be buried. As a matter of fact, in your own silent manner, you influence politics not a little. And I feel that if the attempt to separate politics from

religion had not been made, as it is even now made, they would not have degenerated, as they often appear to do. No one considers that the political life of the country is in a happy state. Following out the swadeshi spirit, I observe the indigenous institutions and the village panchayats hold me. India is really a republican country, and it is because of that that it has survived every shock hitherto delivered. Princes and potentates, whether they were India-born or foreigners, have hardly touched the vast masses except for collecting revenue. The latter in their turn seem to have rendered unto Caesar what was Caesar's and for the rest have done much as they have liked. The vast organization of caste answered not only the religious wants of the community, but it answered too its political needs. The villagers managed their internal affairs through the caste system, and through it they dealt with any oppression from the ruling power or powers. It is not possible to deny of a nation that was capable of producing the caste system its wonderful power of organization. One had but to attend the great Kumbha Mela at Hardwar last year to know how skilful that organization must have been which, without any seeming effort, was able effectively to cater for more than a million pilgrims. Yet is it the fashion to say that we lack organizing ability. This is true, I fear, to a certain extent, of those who have been nurtured in the new traditions. We have laboured under a terrible handicap owing to an almost fatal departure from the swadeshi spirit. We educated classes have received our education through a foreign tongue. We have therefore not reacted upon the masses. We want to represent the masses, but we fail. They recognize us not much more than they recognize the English officers. Their hearts are an open book to neither. Their aspirations are not ours. Hence, there is a break. And you witness not in reality failure to organize, but want of correspondence between the representatives and the represented. If during the last fifty years we had been educated through the vernaculars, our elders and our servants and our neighbours would have partaken of our knowledge: the discoveries of a Bose or a Ray would have been household treasures as are the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata*. As it is, so far as the masses are concerned, those great discoveries

might as well have been made by foreigners. Had instruction in all the branches of learning been given through the vernaculars, I make bold to say that they would have been enriched wonderfully. The question of village sanitation, etc., would have been solved long ago. The village panchayats would be now a living force in a special way, and India would almost be enjoying self-government suited to her requirements and would have been spared the humiliating spectacle of organized assassination on her sacred soil. It is not too late to mend. And you can help if you will, as no other body or bodies can.

And now for the last division of swadeshi. Much of the deep poverty of the masses is due to the ruinous departure from swadeshi in economic and industrial life. If not an article of commerce had been brought from outside India, she would be today a land flowing with milk and honey. But that was not to be. We were greedy and so was England. The connection between England and India was based clearly upon an error. But she (England) does not remain in India in error. It is her declared policy that India is to be held in trust for her people. If this be true, Lancashire must stand aside. And if the swadeshi doctrine is a sound doctrine, Lancashire can stand aside without hurt, though it may sustain a shock for the time being. I think of swadeshi not as a boycott movement undertaken by way of revenge. I conceive it as a religious principle to be followed by all. I am no economist, but I have read some treatises which show that England could easily become a self-sustained country, growing all the produce she needs. This may be an utterly ridiculous proposition and perhaps the best proof that it cannot be true is that England is one of the largest importers in the world. But India cannot live for Lancashire or any other country before she is able to live for herself. And she can live for herself only if she produces and is helped to produce everything for her requirements within her own borders. She need not be, she ought not to be, drawn into the vortex of mad and ruinous competition which breeds fratricide, jealousy and many other evils. But who is to stop her great millionaires from entering into the world

competition ? Certainly, not legislation. Force of public opinion, proper education, however, can do a great deal in the desired direction. The handloom industry is in a dying condition. I took special care during my wanderings last year to see as many weavers as possible, and my heart ached to find how they had lost, how families had retired from this once-flourishing and honourable occupation. If we follow the swadeshi doctrine, it would be your duty and mine to find out neighbours who can supply our wants and to teach them to supply them where they do not know how to, assuming that there are neighbours who are in want of healthy occupation. Then every village of India will almost be a self-supporting and self-contained unit exchanging only such necessary commodities with other villages where they are not locally producible. This may all sound nonsensical. Well, India is a country of nonsense. It is nonsensical to parch one's throat with thirst when a kindly Mahomedan is ready to offer pure water to drink. And yet thousands of Hindus would rather die of thirst than drink water from a Mahomedan household. These nonsensical men can also, once they are convinced that their religion demands that they should wear garments manufactured in India only and eat food only grown in India, decline to wear any other clothing or eat any other foood. Lord Curzon set the fashion for tea-drinking. And that pernicious drug now bids fair to overwhelm the nation. It has already undermined the digestive apparatus of hundreds of thousands of men and women and constitutes an additional tax upon their slender purses. Lord Hardinge can set the fashion for swadeshi and almost the whole of India will forswear foreign goods. There is a verse in the *Bhagavad Gita*, which, freely rendered, means follow the classes. It is easy to undo the evil if the thinking portion of the community were to take the swadeshi vow even though it may for a time cause considerable inconvenience. I hate interference in any department of life. At best, it is the lesser evil. But I would tolerate, welcome, indeed plead for, stiff protective duty upon foreign goods. Natal, a British colony, protected its sugar by taxing the sugar that came from another British colony, Mauritius. England has sinned against India by forcing free trade upon

her. It may have been food for her, but it has been poison for this country.

It has often been urged that India cannot adopt swadeshi in the economic life at any rate. Those who advance this objection donot look upon swadeshi as a rule of life. With them, it is a mere patriotic effort not to be made if it involved my self-denial. Swadeshi, as defined here, is a religious discipline to be undergone in utter disregard of the physical discomfort it may cause to individuals. Under its spell, the deprivation of a pin or a needle, because these are not manufactured in India, need cause no terror. A swadeshi will learn to do without hundreds of things which today he considers necessary. Moreover, those who dismiss swadeshi from their minds by arguing the impossible forget that swadeshi, after all, is a goal to be reached by steady effort. And we would be making for the goal even if we confined swadeshi to a given set of articles, allowing ourselves as a temporary measure to use such things as might not be procurable in the country.

There now remains for me to consider one more objection that has been raised against swadeshi. The objectors consider it to be a most selfish doctrine without any warrant in the civilized code of morality. With them, to practise swadeshi is to revert to barbarism. I cannot enter into a detailed analysis of the proposition. But I would urge that swadeshi is the only doctrine consistent with the law of humility and love It is arrogance to think of launching out to serve the whole of India when I am hardly able to serve my own family. It were better to concentrate my effort upon the family and consider that through them I was serving the whole nation and, if you will, the whole of humanity. This is humility and it is love. The motive will determine the quality of the act. It may serve my family regardless of the sufferings I may cause to others ; as, for instance, I may accept an employment which enables me to extort money from people, enrich myself thereby and then satisfy many unlawful demands of the family. Here I am neither serving the family nor the State. Or I may recognize that God has given me hands and feet only to work with for

my sustenance and for that of those who may be dependent upon me. I would then at once simplify my life and that of those whom I can directly reach. In this instance, I would have served the family without causing injury to anyone else. Supposing that everyone followed this mode of life, we would have at once an ideal State. All will not reach that state at the same time. But those of us who, realizing its truth, enforce it in practice will clearly anticipate and accelerate the coming of that happy day. Under this plan of life, in seeming to serve India to the exclusion of every other country, I do not harm any other country. My patriotism is both exclusive and inclusive. It is exclusive in the sense that in all humility I confine my attention to the land of my birth, but it is inclusive in the sense that my service is not of a competitive or antagonistic nature. *Sic utere tuo ut alsenumn on laedas** is not merely a legal maxim, but it is a grand doctrine of life. It is the key to a proper practice of ahimsa or love It is for you, the custodians of a great faith to set the fashion and show by your preaching, sanctified by practice, that patriotism based on hatred "killeth" and that patriotism based on love "giveth life."

SWARAJ THROUGH SOUL-FORCE**

I am thankful to you all for the exalted position to which you have called me. I have been a baby of two years and a half in Indian politics. I cannot trade here on my experience in South Africa. I know that acceptance of the position is to a certain extent an impertinence. And yet I have been unable to resist the pressure your overwhelming affection has exerted upon me.

I am conscious of my responsibility. This Conference is the first of its kind in Gujarat. The time is most critical for the whole of India. The empire is labouring under a strain never

*This Latin legal maxim means . "Use your property in such a way as not to damage that of others."

**Presidential address to the First Gujarat Political Conference, November 3, 1917.

before experienced. My views donot quite take the general course. I feel that some of them run in the opposite direction. Under the circumstances, I can hardly claim this privileged position. The president of a meeting is usually its spokesman. I cannot pretend to lay any such claim. It is your kindness that gives me such a unique opportunity of placing my thoughts before the Gujarat public. I do not see anything wrong in these views being subjected to criticism, dissent, and even emphatic protest. I would like them to be freely discussed. I will only say with regard to them that they were not formed today or yesterday. But they were formed years ago. I am enamoured of them, and my Indian experience of two years and a half has not altered them.

I congratulate the originators of the proposal to hold this Conference as also those friends who have reduced it to practice. It is a most important event for Gujarat. It is possible for us to make it yield most important results. This Conference is in the nature of a foundation, and if it is well and truly laid, we need have no anxiety as to the superstructure. Being the first progenitor, its responsibility is great. I pray that God will bless us with wisdom and that our deliberations will benefit the people.

This is a political conference. Let us pause a moment over the word "political". It is, as a rule, used in a restricted sense, but I believe it is better to give it a wider meaning. If the work of such a conference were to be confined to a consideration of the relations between the rulers and the ruled, it would not only be incomplete but we should even fail to have an adequate conception of those relations. For instance, the question of Mhowra flowers is of great importance for a part of Gujarat. If it is considered merely as a question between the Government and the people, it might lead to an untoward end, or even to one never desired by us. If we consider the genesis of the law on Mhowra flowers and also appreciated our duty in the matter, we would very probably succeed sooner in our fight with Government than otherwise, and we would easily discover the key to successful agitation. You will more

clearly perceive my interpretation of the word "political" in the light of the views now being laid before you.

Conferences donot, as a rule, after the end of their deliberations, appear to leave behind them an executive body, and even when such a body is appointed, it is, to use the language of the late Mr Gokhale, composed of men who are amateurs. What is wanted, in order to give effect to the resolutions of such conferences, is men who would make it their business to do so. If such men come forward in great numbers, then and then only will such conferences be a credit to the country and produce lasting results. At present there is much waste of energy. It is desirable that there were many institutions of the type of the Servants of India Society. Only when men fired with the belief t at service is the highest religion come forward in great numbers, only then can we hope to see great results. Fortunately, the religious spirit still binds India, and if during the present age the service of the Motherland becomes the end of religion, men and women of religion in large numbers would take part in our public life. When sages and saints take up this work, India will easily achieve her cherished aims. At all events, it is incumbent on us that for the purpose of this Conference we formed an executive committee whose business it would be to enforce its resolutions.

The sound of swaraj pervades the Indian air. It is due to Mrs. Besant that Swaraj is on the lips of hundreds of thousands of men and women. What was unknown to men and women only two years ago, has by her consummate tact and her indefatigable efforts, become common property for them. There cannot be the slightest doubt that her name will take the first rank in history among those who inspired us with the hope that swaraj was attainable at no distant date. Swaraj was, and is, the goal of the Congress. The idea did not originate with her. But the credit of presenting it to us as an easily attainable goal belongs to that lady alone. For that we could hardly thank her enough. By releasing her and her associates, Messrs Arundale and Wadia. Government have laid us under an obligation, and at the same time acknowledged the just and reasonable nature of

the agitation for swaraj. It is desirable that Government should extend the same generosity towards our brothers, Mahomed Ali and Shaukat Ali. It is no use discussing the appositeness or otherwise of what Sir William Vincent has said about them. It is to be hoped that the Government will accede to the people's desire for their release and thus make them responsible for any improper result that might flow from their release. Such clemency will make them all the more grateful to the Government. The act of generosity will be incomplete so long as these brothers are not released. The grant of freedom to the brothers will gladden the people's hearts and endear the Government to them.

Mr. Montague will shortly be in our midst. The work of taking signatures to the petition to be submitted to him is going on a pace. The chief object of this petition is to educate the people about swaraj. To say that a knowledge of letters is essential to obtain swaraj, betrays ignorance of history. A knowledge of letters is not necessary to inculcate among people the idea that we ought to manage our own affairs. What is essential is the grasp of such an idea. People have to desire swaraj. Hundreds of unlettered kings have ruled kingdoms in an effective manner. To see how far such an idea exists in the minds of the people, and to try to create it where it is absent, is the object of this petition. It is desirable that millions of men and women should sign it intelligently. That such a largely signed petition will have its due weight with Mr. Montague is its natural result.

No one has the right to alter the scheme of reforms approved by the Congress and the Muslim League, and one need not, therefore, go into the merits thereof. For our present purposes, we have to understand thoroughly the scheme formulated most thoughtfully by our leaders and to do faithfully the things necessary to get it accepted and enforced.

This scheme is not swaraj but is a great step towards swaraj. Some English critics tell us that we have no right to enjoy swaraj, because the class that demands it is incapable of

defending India. "Is the defence of India to rest with the English alone," they ask, "and are the reins of Government to be in the hands of the Indians ?" Now this is a question which excites both laughter and sorrow. It is laughable, because our English friends fancy that they are not of us ; whilst our plan of swaraj is based upon retention of the British connection. We donot expect the English settlers to leave the country. They will be our partners in swaraj. And they need not grumble if in such a scheme the burden of the defence of the country falls on them. They are however hasty in assuming that we shall not do our share of defending the country. When India decides upon qualifying herself for the act of soldiering, she will attain to it in no time. We have but to harden our feelings to be able to strike. To cultivate a hardened feeling does not take ages. It grows like weeds. The question has also its tragic side, because it puts us in mind of the fact that Government have upto now debarred us from military training. Had they been so minded they would have had at their disposal today, from among the educated classes, an army of trained soldiers. Government have to accept a larger measure of blame than the educated classes for the latter having taken little part in the war. Had the Government policy been shaped differently from the very commencement, they would have today an unconquerable army. But let no one be blamed for the present situation. At the time British rule was established it was considered to be a wise policy for the governance of crores of men to deprive them of arms and military training. But it is never too late to mend, and both the rulers and the ruled must immediately repair the omission.

In offering these views, I have assumed the propriety of the current trend of thoughts. To me, however, it does not appear to be tending altogether in the right direction. Our agitation is based on the Western model. The swaraj we desire is of a Western type. As a result of it, India will have to en er into competition with the Western nations. Many believe that there is no escape from it. I do uot think so. I cannot forget that India is not Europe, India is not Japan, India is not China.

The divine word that "India alone is the land of karma" (Action), the rest the land of bhoga (Enjoyment), is indelibly imprinted on my mind. I feel that India's mission is different from that of the others. India is fitted for religious supremacy of the world. There is no parallel in the world far the process of purification that this country has voluntarily undergone. India is less in need of steel weapons ; it has fought with divine weapons ; it can still do so. Other nations have been votaries of brute force. The terrible war going on in Europe furnishes a forcible illustration of the truth. India can win all by soul-force. History supplies numerous instances to prove that brute force is nothing before soul-force. Poets have sung about it and seers have described their experiences. A thirty-year-old Hercules behaves like a lamb before his eighty-year-old father. This is an instance of love force. Love is atman ; it is its attribute. If we have faith enough we can wield that force over the whole world. Religion having lost its hold on us, we are without an anchor to keep us firm amidst the storm of modern civilization and are therefore being tossed to and fro. Enough, however, of this for the present. I shall return to it at a later stage.

In spite of my views being as I have just described them, I do not hesitate to take part in the swaraj morement, for India is being governed in accordance with the modern system, and even the Government admit that the "Parliament" presents the best type of that system. Without parliamentary government, we should be nowhere. Mrs. Besant is only too true when she says that we shall soon be facing hunger-strike if we do not have Home Rule. I do not want to go into statistics. The evidence of my eyes is enough for me. Poverty in India is deepening day by day. No other result is possible. A country that exports its raw produce and imports it after it has undergone manufacturing process, a country that in spite of growing its own cotton has to pay crores of rupees for its imported cloth, cannot be otherwise than poor. It can only be said of a poor country that its people are spend-thrifts, because they ungrudgingly spend money in marriage and such other ceremonies. It must be a terribly poor country that

cannot afford to spend enough on carrying out improvements for stamping out epidemics like the plague. The poverty of a country must continuously grow when the salaries of its highly paid officials are spent outside it. Surely it must be India's keen poverty that compels its people during ccld weather for want of woollen clothing to burn their precious manure in order to warm themselves. Throughout my wanderings in India, I have rarely seen a buoyant face. The middle classes are groaning under the weight of lawful distress. For the lowest order there is no hope. They do not know a bright day. It is a pure fiction to say that India's riches are buried underground, or are to be found in her ornaments. What there is of such riches is of no consequence. The nation's expenditure has increased, not so its income. Government have not deliberately brought about this state of things. I believe that their intentions are pure. It is their honest opinion that the nation's prosperity is daily growing. Their faith in their blue-books is immovable. It is only too true the statistics can be made to prove anything. The economists reduce India's prosperity from statistics. People like me who appreciate the popular way of examining figures shake their heads over blue-books statistics. If the gods were to come down and testify otherwise, I would insist on saying that I see India growing poorer.

What then would our Parliament do ? When we have it, we would have a right to commit blunders and to correct them. In the early stages we are bound to make blunders. But we being children of the soil won't lose time in setting ourselves right. We shall, therefore, soon find out remedies against poverty. Then our existence won't be dependent on Lancashire goods. Then we shall not be found spending untold riches on Imperial Delhi. It will then bear some correspondence to the peasant cottage. There will be some proportion observed between that cottage and our Parliament House. "The nation today is in a helpless condition, it does not possess even the right to err. He who has no right to err, can never go forward." The history of the Commons is a history of blunders. Man, says an Arabian proverb, is error personified. "Freedom to err and the

duty of correcting errors is one definition of swaraj." And such swaraj lies in Parliament. That Parliament we need today. We are fitted for it today. We shall, therefore, get it on demand. It rests with us to define "today". Swaraj is not to be attained through an appeal to the British democracy. The English nation cannot appreciate such an appal. Its reply will be : "We never sought outside help to obtain swaraj. We have received it through our own ability. You have not received it, because you are unfit. When you are fit for it nobody can withhold it from you." How then shall we fit ourselves for it ? We have to demand swaraj from our own people. Our appeal must be to it. When the peasantry of India understand what swaraj is, the demand will become irresistible. The late Sir W.W. Hunter used to say that in the British system, victory on the battle-field was the shortest cut to success. If educated India could have taken its full share in the war. I am certain that we would not only have reached our goal already, but the manner of the grant would have been altogether unique. We often refer to the fact that many sepoys of Hindustan have lost their lives on the battle-fields of France and Mesopotamia. It is not possible for the educated classes to claim the credit for this event. It is not patriotism that had prompted those sepoys to go to the battle-field. They know nothing of swaraj. At the end of the war they will not ask for it. They have gone to demonstrate that they are faithful to the salt they eat. In asking for swaraj, I feel that it is not possible for us to bring into account their services. The only thing we can say is, that we may not be considered blameworthy for our inability to take a large and active part in the prosecution of the war.

That we have been loyal at a time of stress is no test of fitness for swaraj. Loyalty is no merit. It is a necessity of citizenship all the world over. That loyalty can be no passport to swaraj is a self-demonstrated maxim. Our fitness lies in that we now keenly desire swaraj, and in the conviction we have reached that bureaucracy, although it has served India with pure intentions, has had its day. And this kind of fitness is sufficient for our purpose. Without swaraj there is now no possibility of peace in India.

But if we confine our activities for advancing swaraj only to holding meetings, the nation is likely to suffer harm. Meetings and speeches have their own place and time. But they cannot make a nation.

In a nation fired with swaraj zeal, we shall observe an awakening in all departments of life. The first step to swaraj lies in the individual. The great truth "As with the individual so with the universe," is applicable here as elsewhere. If we are ever torn by conflict from within, if we are ever going astray, and if instead of ruling our passions we allow them to rule us, swaraj can have no meaning for us. Government of self, then, is primary education in the school of swaraj.

Then the family. If dissensions reign supreme in our families, if brothers fight among themselves, if joint families, *i.e.*, families enjoying self-government, become divided through family quarrels, and if we are unfit even for such restricted swaraj, how can we be considered fit for the larger swaraj ?

Now for the caste. If caste-fellows become jealous of one another, if the castes cannot regulate their affairs in an orderly manner, if the elders want to usurp power, if the members become self-opinionated and thus show their unfitness for tribal self-government, how can they be fit for national self-government ?

After caste the city. If we cannot regulate the affairs of our cities, if our streets are not kept clean, if our homes are dilapidated and if our roads are crooked, if we cannot command the services of selfiess citizens for civic government, and those who are in charge of affairs are neglectful or selfish, how shall we claim larger powers ? The way to national life lies through the cities. It is, therefore, necessary to linger a little longer on civic government.

The plague has found a home in India. Cholera has been always with us. Malaria takes an annual toll of thousands. The plague has been driven out from every other part of the world. Glasgow drove it out as soon as it entered it. In Johannesburg it could appear but once. Its municipality made

a great effort and stamped it out within a month, whereas we are able to produce little impression upon it. We cannot blame the Government for this state of things. In reality we cannot make our poverty answerable for it. None can interfere with us in the prosecution of any remedies that we might wish to adopt. Ahmedabad, for instance, cannot evade responsibility by pleading poverty. I fear that in respect of the plague we must shoulder the whole responsibility. It is a matter of wonderment that when the plague is working havoc in our rural quarters, cantonments, as a rule, remain free. Reasons for such immunity are obvious. In the cantonments the atmosphere is pure, houses detached, roads are wide and clean, the sanitary habits of the residents are exceptionally sound, whereas ours are as unhygienic as they well could be. Our closets are pestilentially dirty. Ninety per cent of our population go barefoot, people spit anywhere, perform natural functions anywhere and are obliged to walk along roads and paths thus dirtied. It is no wonder that the plague has found a home in our midst.

Unless we alter the conditions of our cities, rid ourselves of dirty habits and reform our castes, swaraj for us can have no value.

It will not be considered out of place here to refer to the condition of the so-called untouchables. The result of considering the most useful members of society as unworthy of being even touched by us has been that we let them clean only a part of our closets. In the name of religion we ourselves would not clean the remainder for fear of pollution and so, in spite of personal cleanliness, a portion of our houses remains the dirtiest in the world, with the result that we are brought up in an atmosphere which is laden with disease germs. We were safe so long as we kept to our villages. But in the cities we ever commit suicide by reason of our insanitary habits.

Where many die before their death, there is every probability that people are devoid of both religion and its practice. I believe that it ought not to be beyond us to banish the plague from India, and if we could do so, we shall have increased our

fitness for swaraj, as it could not be by agitation, no matter however great. This is a question meriting the serious consideration of our doctors and vaidyas.

Our sacred Dakorji is our next-door neighbour. I have visited that holy place. Its unholiness is limitless. I consider myself a devout Vaishnavite. I claim, therefore, a special privilege of criticizing the conditions of Dakorji. The insanitation of that place is so great that one used to hygienic conditions can hardly bear to pass even twenty-four hours there. The pilgrims are permitted to pollute the tank and the streets as they choose. The keepers of the idol quarrel among themselves and, to add insult to injury, a receiver has been appointed to take charge of the jewellery and costly robes of the idot. It is our clear duty to set this wrong right. How shall we, Gujaratis, bent on attaining swaraj, discharge ourselves in its army if we cannot sweep our houses clean ?

The inconsideration of the state of education in our cities also fills us with despondency. It is up to us to provide, by private effort, for the education of the masses. But our gaze is fixed upon Government whilst our children are starving for want of education.

In the cities the drink evil is on the increase, tea-shops are multiplying, gambling is rampant. If we cannot remedy these evils, how should we attain swaraj whose meaning is government of ourselves ?

We have reached a time when we and our children are likely to be deprived of our milk supply. Dairies in Gujarat are doing us infinite harm. They buy out practically the whole milk supply and sell its products. butter, cheese, etc., in a wider market. How can a nation whose nourishment is chiefly derived from milk allow this important article of food to be thus exploited ? How can men be heedless of the national health and think of enriching themselves by such an improper use of this article of diet ? Milk and its products are of such paramount value to the nation that they deserve to be

controlled by the municipalities. What are we doing about them ?

I have just returned from the scene of Bakr-Id riots. For an insignificant cause, the two communities quarrelled, mischievous men took advantage of it, and a mere spark became a blaze. We were found to be helpless. We have been obliged to depend only upon Government assistance. This is a significant illustration of the condition I am trying to describe.

It will not be inopportune to dwell for a moment on the question of cow protection. It is an important question. And yet it is entrusted to the so-called cow protection societies. The protection of cows is an old custom. It has originated in the necessity of the country. Protection of its cows is incumbent upon a country, 73 per cent of whose population lives upon agriculture and uses only bullocks for it. In such a country even meat-eaters should abstain from beef-eating. These natural causes should be enough justification for not killing cows. But here we have to face a peculiar situation. The chief meaning of cow protection seems to be to prevent cows from going into the hands of our Mussalmans brethren and being used as a food. The governing class seem to need beef. On their behalf thousands of cows are slaughtered daily. We take no steps to prevent the slaughter. We hardly make any attempt to prevent the cruel torture of cows by certain Hindu dairies of Calcutta, which subject them to certain indescribable practices and make them yield the last drop of milk. In Gujarat, Hindu drivers use spiked sticks to goad bullocks into action. We say nothing about it. The bullocks of our cities are to be seen in a pitiable condition. Indeed, protection of the cow and her progeny is a very great problem. With us it has degenerated into a pretext for quarrelling with the Mahomedans, and we have thus contributed to a further slaughter of cows. It is not religion, but want of it, to kill a Mahomedan brother who declines to part with his cow. I feel sure that if we were to negotiate with our Mussalman brothers upon a basis of love, they will appreciate the peculiar condition of India and readily co-operate with us in the protection of cows. By courtesy and even by satyagraha we can engage them in

that mission. But in order to be able to do this, we shall have to understand the question in its true bearing. We shall have to prepare rather to die than to kill. But we shall be able to do this only when we understand the real value of the cow and have pure love for her. Many ends will be automatically served in achieving this one end. Hindus and Mahomedans will live in peace, milk and its products will be available in a pure condition and will be cheaper than now, and our bullocks will become the envy of the world. By real tapasya, it is possible for us to stop cow slaughter, whether by the English, Mahomedans or Hindus. This one act will bring swaraj many a step nearer.

Many of the foregoing problems belong to municipal government. We can, therefore, clearly see that national government is dependent upon purity of the government of our cities.

It will not be considered an improper statement to say that the swadeshi movement is in an inane condition We donot realize that swaraj is almost wholly obtainable through swadeshi. If we have no regard for our respective vernaculars, if we dislike our clothes. If our dress repels us, if we are ashamed to wear the sacred Shikha, if our food is distasteful to us, our climate is not good enough, our people uncouth and unfit for our company, our civilization faulty and the foreign attractive, in short, if everything native is bad and everything foreign pleasing to us, I should not know what swaraj can mean for us. If everything foreign is to be adopted, surely it will be necessary for us to continue long under foreign tutelage, because foreign civilization has not permeated the masses. It seems to me that, before we can appreciate swaraj, we should have not only love but passion for swadeshi. Everyone of our acts should bear the swadeshi stamp. Swaraj can only be built upon the assumption that most of what is national is on the whole sound. If the view here put forth be correct, the swadeshi movement ought to be carried on vigorously. Every country that has carried on the swaraj movement has fully appreciated the swadeshi spirit. The Scotch Highlanders hold

on to their kilts even at the risk of their lives. We humorously call the Highlanders the "petticoat brigade". But the whole world testifies to the strength that lies behind that petticoat and the Highlanders of Scotland will not abandon it even though it is an inconvenient dress and an easy target for the enemy. The object in developing the foregoing argument is not that we should treasure our faults but that what is national even though comparatively less agreeable, should be adhered to, and that what is foreign should be avoided, though it may be more agreeable than our own That which is wanting in our civilization can be supplied by proper effort on our part. I do hope that the swadeshi spirit will possess every member in this assembly, and that we would carry out the swadeshi vow in spite of great difficulties and inconvenience. Then swaraj will be easy of attainment.

The foregoing illustrations go to show that our movement should be twofold. We may petition the government, we may agitate in the Imperial Council for our rights, but for a real awakening of the people, internal activity is more important. There is likelihood of hypocrisy and selfishness tainting external activity. There is less danger of such a catastrophe in the internal activity. Without being balanced by the internal, the external activity not only lacks grace, but it is likely to be barren of results. It is not my contention that we have no internal activity at all, but I submit we do not lay enough stress upon it.

One sometimes hears it said : "Let us get the Government of India in our own hands and everything will be all right." There could be no greater superstition than this. No nation has thus gained its independence. The splendour of the spring is reflected in every tree, the whole earth is then filled with the freshness of youth. Similarly when the swaraj spirit has really permeated society, a stranger suddenly come upon us will observe energy in every walk of life, he will find national servants engaged, each according to his own abilities, in a variety of public activities.

If we admit that our progress has not been what it might have been, we shall have to admit two reasons for it : We have kept our women strangers to these activities of ours and have thus brought about paralysis of half the national limb. The nation walks with one leg only. All its work appears to be only half or incompletely done. Moreover, the learned section, having received its education through a foreign tongue, has become enervated and it is unable to give the nation the benefit of such ability as it possesses. I need not reiterate my views on this subject as I have elaborated them in my address delivered before the Gujarat Educational Conference. It is a wise decision, that of conducting the proceedings of this Conference in Gujarati, and I hope that all Gujaratis will adhere to the determination and resist every temptation to alter it.

The educated class, lovers of swaraj, must freely mix with the masses. We dare not reject a single member of the community. We shall make progress only if we carry all with us. Had the educated class identified itself with the masses, Bakr-Id riots would have been an impossibility.

I now reach the concluding topic. There are two methods of attaining the desired end : Truthfulness and Truthlessness. In our scriptures they have been described respectively as divine and devilish. In the path of satyagraha there is always unflinching adherence to Truth. It is never to be forsaken on any account, not even for the sake of one's country. The final triumph of Truth is always assumed for the divine method. Its votary does not abandon it, even though at times the path seems impenetrable and beset with difficulties and dangers, and a departure however slight from that straight path may appear full of promise. His faith even then shines resplendent like the midday sun and he does not despond. With truth for sword, he needs neither steel nor gunpowder. He conquers the enemy by the force of the soul, which is love. Its test is not to be found among friends. There is neither newness, nor merit, nor yet effort in a friend loving a friend. It is tested truly when it is bectowed on the so-called enemy : it then becomes a virtue, there is effort in it, it is an act of manliness and real bravery.

We can adopt this method towards the Government and in doing so, we should be in a position to appreciate their beneficial activities and with greater case correct their errors, because we should draw attention to them not in angular but in love. Love does not act through fear. There can, therefore, be no weakness in its expression. A coward is incapable of exhibiting love, it is the prerogative of the brave. Following this method we shall not look upon all Governmental activity with suspicion, we shall not ascribe bad motives to them. And our examination of their actions, being directed by love, will be unerring and bound, therefore, to carry conviction with them.

Love has its struggles. In the intoxication of power, man often fails to detect his mistake. When that happens, a passive resister does not sit still He suffers. He disobeys the ruler's laws and orders in a civil manner and willingly incurs hardships caused by such disobedience, *e g.*, imprisonment and gallows. Thus is the soul disciplined. Here there is no waste of energy, and any untoward results of such respectful disobedience are suffered merely by him and his companions. A passive resister is not at sixes and sevens with those in power but the latter willingly yield to him. "They know that they cannot effectively exercise force against the passive resister. Without his concurrence they cannot make him do their will. And this is the full fruition of swaraj, because in it is complete independence." It need not be taken for granted that such decorous resistance is possible only in respect of civilized rulers. Even a heart of flint will melt in front of a fire kindled by the power of the soul. Even a Nero becomes a lamb when he faces love. This is no exaggeration. It is as true as an algebraical equation. This satyagraha is India's special weapon. It has had others but satyagraha has commanded greater attention. It is omnipresent and is capable of being used at all times and under all circumstances. It does not require a Congress license. He who knows its power cannot help using it. Even as the eyelashes automatically protect the eyes, so does satyagraha, when kindled, automatically protect the freedom of the soul.

But truthlessness has opposite attibutes. The terrible war going on in Europe is a case in point. Why should a nation's

cause be considered right and another's wrong because it overpowers the latter by sheer brute force ? The strong are often seen preying upon the weak. The wrongness of the latter's cause is not to be inferred from their defeat in a trial of brute strength, nor is the rightness of the strong to be inferred from their success in such a trial. The wielder of brute force does not scruple about the means to be used. He does not question the propriety of means if he can somehow achieve his purpose. This is not dharma, it is adharma. In dharma there cannot be a particle of untruth, cruelty or the taking of life. The measure of dharma is the measure of love, kindness, truth. Heaven itself is no acceptable exchange for them. Swaraj itself is useless at the sacrifice of Truth. Sacrifice of Truth is the foundation of a nation's destruction. The believer in brute force becomes impatient and desires the death of the so-called enemy. There can be but one result of such an activity. Hatred increases. The defeated party vows vengeance and simply bides his time. Thus does the spirit of revenge descend from father to son. It is much to be wished that India may not give predominance to the worship of brute force. If the members of this Assembly will deliberately accept satyagraha in laying down its own programme, they will reach their goal all the easier for it. They may have to face disappoinment in the initial stages. They may not see results for a time. But satyagraha will triumph in the end. The brute-force man, like the oilman's ox, moves in a circle. It is a motion, but it is not progress, whereas the votary of Truth force ever moves forward.

A superficial critic reading the foregoing is likely to conclude that the views herein expressed are mutually destructive. On the one hand, I appeal to the Government to give military training to the people, on the other I put satyagraha on the pedestal. Surely there can be no room for the use of arms in satyagraha, nor is there any. But military training is intended for those who donot believe in satyagraha. That the whole of India will ever accept satyagraha is beyond my imagination. Not to defend the weak is an entirely effeminate idea, everywhere to be rejected. In order to protect our innocent sister

from the brutal designs of a man, we ought to offer ourselves a willing sacrifice and by the force of love conquer the brute in the man. But if we have not attained that power we would certainly use up all our bodily strength in order to frustrate those designs. The votaries of soul-force and brute force are both soldiers. The latter, bereft of his arms, acknowledges defeat, the former does not know what defeat is. He does not depend upon the perishable body and its weapons, but he derives his strength from the unconquerable and immortal soul. The thing outside the two is not a man, for he does not recognize the Dweller within him. If he did, he would not take fright and run away from danger. Like a miser trying to save his flesh, he loses all, he does not know how to die. But the armoured soldier always has death by him as a companion. There is hope of his becoming a passive resister, and one has a right to hope that India, the holy land of the gods, will ever give the predominant place to the divine force rather than to the brute force. Might is right as a formula which, let us hope, will never find acceptance in India. Her formula is Truth alone conquers.

Upon reflection we find that we can employ satyagraha even for a social reform. We can rid ourselves of many defects in our social institutions. We can settle the Hindu-Mohammedan problem, and we can deal with political questions. It is well that for the sake of facilitating progress we divide our activities according to the subjects handled. But it should never he forgotten that all are inter-related. It is not true to say that neither religion nor social reform has anything to do with politics. The result obtained by bringing religion into play in the consideration of political subjects will be different from that obtained without it. The Hindus caln ill afford to neglect 56 lakhs of ignorant sadhus in considering political matters. Our Mussalman brethren cannot lose sight of their fakeers. In advancing political progress the condition of our widows and child marriages must have their proper place, and the purdah must tax Mussalman wit. Nor can we, Hindus and Mohammedans, in considering politics shut our eyes to scores of questions that arise between us.

Indeed, our difficulties are like the Himalayas. But we have equally powerful means at our disposal for removing them. We are children of an ancient nation. We have witnessed the burial of civilizations, those of Rome, Greece and Egypt. Our civilization abides even as the ocean in spite of its ebbs and flows. We have all we need to keep ourselves independent. We have the mountains that kiss the sky, we have the mighty rivers. We have the matchless beauties of Nature and we have handed down to us a heritage of deeds of valour. This country in the treasure-house of tapasya. In this country alone do people belonging to different religions live together in amity. In this country alone do all the gods receive their due measure of worship. We shall disgrace our heritage, and our connection with the British nation will be vain if, in spite of such splendid equipment by some unique effort, we donot conquer our conquerors. The English nation is full of adventure, the religious spirit guides it, it has unquenchable faith in itself, it is a nation of great soldiers it treasures its independence, but it has given the place of honour to its commercial instinct, it has not always narrowly examined the means adopted for seeking wealth. It worships modern civilization. The ancient ideals have lost their hold upon it. If, therefore, instead of imitating that nation, we donot forget our past, we have real regard for our civilization, we have firm faith in its supremacy, we shall be able to make a proper use of our connection with the British nation and make it beneficial to ourselves, to them and to the whole world. I pray to the Almighty that this Assembly, taking its full share of this great work, may shed lustre upon itself, upon Gujarat, and upon the whole of Bharatavarsha.

SATYAGRAHA PLEDGE*

It behoves everyone who wishes to take the satyagraha pledge seriously to consider all its factors before taking it. It is necessary to understand the principles of satyagraha, to understand the main features of the Bills known as the Rowlatt Bills, and to be satisfied that they are so objectionable as to

*Speech at Allahabad, March 11, 1919.

warrant the very powerful remedy of satyagraha being applied and, finally, to be convinced of one's ability to undergo every form of bodily suffering, so that the soul may be set free and be under no fear from any human being or institution. Once in it, there is no looking back.

Therefore, there is no conception of defeat in satyagraha. A satyagrahi fights even unto death. It is thus not an easy thing for everybody to enter upon it. It, therefore, behoves a satyagrahi to be tolerant of those who do not join him. In reading reports of satyagraha meetings, I often notice that ridicule is poured upon those who do not join our movement. That is entirely against the spirit of the pledge. In satyagraha we expect to win over opponents by self-suffering, *i e.*, by love. The process whereby we hope to reach our goal is by so conducting ourselves as gradually and in an unperceived manner to disarm all opposition. Opponents as a rule expect irritation, even violence from one another when both parties are equally matched. But when satyagraha comes into play, the expectation is transformed into agreeable surprise in the mind of the party towards whom satyagraha is addressed till at last he relents and recalls the act which necessitated satyagraha. I venture to promise that if we act up to our pledge day after day, the atmosphere around us will be purified and those who differ from as from honest motives, as I verily believe they do, will perceive that their alarm was unjustified. The violationists wherever they may be, will realize that they have in satyagraha a far more potent instrument for achieving reform than violence whether secret or open and that it gives them enough work for their inexhaustible energy. And the Government will have no case left in defence of their measures if, as a result of our activity, the cult of violence is notably on the wane if it has not entirely died out. I hope, therefore, that at satyagraha meetings we shall have no cries of shame, and no language betraying irritation or impatience either against the Government or our countrymen who differ from us, and some of whom have for years been devoting themselves to the country's cause according to the best of their ability.

NON-CO-OPERATION*

I am aware, more than aware, of the grave responsibility that rests on my shoulders in being privileged to move this resolution before this great assembly. I am aware that my difficulties, as also yours, increase if you are able to adopt this resolution. I am also aware that the adoption of any resolution will mark a definite change in the policy which the country has hitherto adopted for the vindication of the rights that belong to it and its honour. I am aware that a large number of our leaders who have given the time and attention to the affairs of my Motherland which I have not been able to give are ranged against me. They think it a duty to resist the policy of revolutionizing the Government policy at any cost. Knowing this I stand before you in fear of God and a sense of duty to put this before you for your hearty acceptance.

I ask you to dismiss me, for the time being, from your consideration. I have been charged with saintliness and a desire for dictatorship. I venture to say that I donot stand before you either as a saint or a candidate for dictatorship. I stand before you to present to you the results of may many years' practical experience in non-co-operation. I deny the charge that it is a new thing in the country. It has been accepted at hundreds of meetings attended by thousands of men and has been placed in working order since the 1st of August by the Mussalmans, and many of the things in the programme are being enforced in a more or less intense form. I ask you again to dismiss personalities in the consideration of this important question and bring to bear patient and calm judgement on it. But mere acceptance of the resolution does not end the work. Every individual has to enforce the items of the resolution in so far as they apply to him. I beseech you to give me a patient hearing. I ask you neither to clap nor to hiss. You will not hiss out of the stage any single speaker. For non-co-operation is a measure of discipline and sacrifice and it demands patience and respect for opposite views. And

*Speech at the special session of the Indian National Congress held at Calcutta, September 8, 1920.

unless we are able to evolve a spirit of mutual toleration for diametrically opposite views, non-co-operation is an impossibility. Non-co-operation in an angry atmosphere is an impossibility. I have learnt through bitter experience the one supreme lesson to conserve my anger, and as heat conserved is transmuted into energy, even so our anger controlled can be transmuted into a power which can move the world. Those who have been attending the Congress as brothers-in-arms I ask what can be better discipline than that which we should exercise between ourselves ?

I have been told that I have been doing nothing but wreckage and that by bringing forward the resolution, I am breaking up the political life of the country. The Congress is not a party organization. It ought to provide a platform for all shades of opinion, and a minority need not leave this organization but may look forward to translating itself into a majority in course of time if its opinion comments itself to the country. Only let no man in the name of the Congress advocate a policy which has been condemned by the Congress. And if you condemn my policy, I shall not go away from the Congress but shall plead with them to convert the minority into a majority.

There are no two opinions as to the wrong done to the Khilafat. Mussalmans cannot remain as honourable men and follow their Prophet if they do not vindicate their honour at any cost. The Punjab has been cruelly, brutally treated and in as much as one man in the Punjab was made to crawl on his belly, the whole of India crawled on her belly, and if we are worthy sons and daughters of India, we should be pledged to remove these wrongs. It is in order to remove these wrongs that the country is agitating itself. But we have not been able to bend the Government to our will. We cannot rest satisfied with a mere expression of angry feeling. You could not have heard a more passionate denunciation of the Punjab wrongs than in the pages of the Presidential address. If the Congress cannot wring justice from unwilling hands, how can it vindicate its existence and its honour ? How can it do so if it can-

not enforce clear repentance before receiving a single gift, however rich, from those blood-stained hands ?

I have therefore placed before you my scheme of non-co-operation to achieve this end and want you to reject any other scheme unless you have deliberately come to the conclusion that it is a better scheme than mine. If there is a sufficient response to my scheme, I make bold to reiterate my statement that you can gain swaraj in the course of a year. Not the passing of the resolution will bring swaraj but the enforcement of the resolution from day to day in a progressive manner, due regard being had to the conditions. There is another remedy before the country and that is the drawing of the sword. If that was possible, India would not have listened to the gospel of non-co-operation. I want to suggest to you that even if you want to arrest injustice by methods of violence, discipline and self-sacrifice are necessary. I have not known of a war gained by a rabble, but I have known of wars gained by disciplined armies and if you want to give battle to the British Government and to the combined power of Europe, we must train ourselves in discipline and self-sacrifice. I confess I have become impatient. I have seen that we deserve swaraj today, but we have not got the spirit of national sacrifice. We have evolved this spirit in domestic affairs and I have come to ask you to extend it to other affairs. I have been travelling from one end to the other end of the country to see whether the country has evolved the national spirit, whether at the altar of the nation it is ready to dedicate its riches, children, its all, if it is ready to make the initiatory sacrifice. Is the country ready ? Are the title-holders ready to surrender their titles ? Are parents ready to sacrifice the literacy education of their children for the sake of the country ? The schools and colleges are really a factory for turning out clerks for Government. If the parents are not ready for the sacrifice, if title-holders are not ready, swaraj is very nearly an impossibility.... Immediately the conquered country realized instinctively that any gift which might come to it is not for the benefit of the conquered but for the benefit of the conqueror, that moment it should reject every form of voluntary assistance to it. These are the fundamental essentials of success in the struggle for the independence of the country

whether within the Empire or without the Empire. I hold a real substantial unity between Hindus and Mussalmans infinitely superior to the British connection, and if I had to make a choice between that unity and the British connection, I would have the first and reject the other. If I had to choose between the honour of the Punjab, anarchy, neglect of education, shutting out of all legislative activity, and British connection, I would choose the honour of the Punjab and all it meant, even anarchy, shutting out of all schools, etc., without the slightest hesitation.

If you have the same feeling burning in you as in me for the honour of Islam and the Punjab, then you will unreservedly accept my resolution.

I now come to the burning topic, *viz.*, the boycott of the councils. Sharpest differences of opinion exist regarding this and if the house has to divide on it, it must divide on one issue, *viz.*, whether swaraj has to be gained through the councils or without the councils. If we utterly distrust the British Government and we know that they are utterly unrepentant, how can you believe that the councils will lead to swaraj and not tighten the British hold on India ?

I now come to swadeshi. The boycott of foreign goods is included in the resolution. You have got here, I confess, an anomaly for which I am not originally responsible. But I have consented to it. I will not go into the history of how it found a place into the resolution of which the essence is discipline and self-sacrifice. Swadeshi means permanent boycott of foreign goods. It is therefore a matter of redundancy. But I have taken it in, because I could not reject it as a matter of conscience. I know, however, it is a physical impossibility. So long as we have to rely on the pins and needles—figurative and literal both—we cannot bring about a complete boycott of foreign goods. I do not hesitate to say this clause mars the musical harmony, if I may claim it without vanity, of the programme. I feel that those words do mar the symmetry of the programme. But I am not here for the symmetry of the programme as for its workability.

I again ask you not to be influenced by personality. Reject out of your consideration any service that I have done. Two things only a claim : Laborious industry, great thought behind my programme, and unflinching determination to bring it about. You may take only those things from me and bring them to bear on any programme that you adopt.

THE CREED OF THE CONGRESS*

The resolution which I have the honour to move is as follows : "The object of the Indian National Congress is the attainment of swaraj by the people of India by all legitimate and peaceful means."

There are only two kinds of objections so far as I understand that will be advanced from this platform. One is, that we may not today think of dissolving the British connection. What I say is, that it is derogatory to national dignity to think of the permanence of the British connection at any cost. We are labouring under a grievous wrong which it is the personal duty of every Indian to get redressed. The British Government not only refuses to redress the wrong but it refuses to acknowledge its mistakes, and so long as it retains its attitude, it is not possible for us to say all that we want to be or all that we want to get, retaining the British connection. No matter what difficulties be in our path, we must make the clearest possible declaration to the world and to the whole of India that we may not possibly have the British connection if the British people will not do this elementary justice. I do not for one moment suggest that we want to end the connection at all costs unconditionally. If the British connection is for the advancement of India, we do not want to destroy it. But if it is inconsistent with our national self-respect, then it is our bounden duty to destroy it. There is room in this resolution for both—those who believe that by retaining the British connection, we can purify ourselves and purify British people, and those who have no belief. As for instance, take the extreme case of Mr.

*Speech at the A.I.C.C. session held at Nagpur, December 28, 1920.

Andrews. He says all hope for India is gone for keeping the British connection. He says there must be complete severance —complete independence. There is room enough in this creed for a man like Mr. Andrews also. Take another illustration, a man like myself or my brother Shaukat Ali. There is certainly no room for us if we have eternally to subscribe to the doctrine : whether these wrongs are redressed or not, we shall have to evolve ourselves within the British Empire. There is no room for me in that creed. Therefore this creed is elastic enough to take in both shades of opinion and the British people will have to beware that if they do not want to do justice, it will be the bounden duty of every Indian to destroy the Empire.

I want just now to wind up my remarks with a personal appeal, drawing your attention to an object-lesson that was presented in the Bengal camp yesterday. If you want swaraj, you have got a demonstration of how to get swaraj. There was a little bit of skirmish, a little bit of squabble, and a little bit of difference in the Bengal camp, as there will always be differences so long as the world lasts. I have known differences between husband and wife, because I am still a husband ; I have noticed differences between parents and children, because I am still a father of four boys, and they are all strong enough to destroy their father so far as bodily struggle is concerned ; I possess that varied experience of husband and parent ; I know that we shall always have squabbles, we shall always have differences but the lesson that I want to draw your attention to it, that I had the honour and privilege of addressing both the parties. They gave me their undivided attention and, what is more, they showed their attachment, their affection and their fellowship for me by accepting the humble advice that I had the honour of tendering to them, and I told them : "I am not here to distribute justice that can be awarded only through our worthy President. But I ask you not to go to the President ; you need not worry him. If you are strong, if you are brave, if you are intent upon getting swaraj, and if you really want to revise the creed, then you will bottle up your rage, you will bottle up all the feelings of injustice that may rankle in your hearts and forget these things here under this very roof." And

I told them to forget their differences, to forget the wrongs. I don't want to tell you or go into the history of that incident....

I only wanted my Bengali friends and all the other friends who have come to this great assembly with a fixed determination to seek nothing but the settlement of their country, to seek nothing but the advancement of their respective rights, to seek nothing but the conservation of the national honour. I appeal to every one of you to copy the example set by those who felt aggrieved and who felt that their heads were broken. I know before we have done with this great battle on which we have embarked at the special sessions of the Congress, we have to go probably, possibly, through a sea of blood, but let it not be said of us or anyone of us that we are guilty of shedding blood, but let it be said by generations yet to be born that we suffered, that we shed not somebody's blood but our own, and so I have no hesitation in saying that I do not want to show much sympathy for those who had their heads broken or who were said to be even in danger of losing their lives. What does it matter ? It is much better to die at the hands, at least, of our countrymen. What is there to revenge ourselves about or upon ? So I ask everyone of you that at any time there is blood boiling within you against some fellow-countryman of yours, even though he may be in the employ of Government, even though he may be in the secret service, you will take care not to be offended and not to return blow for blow. Understand that the very moment you return the blow from the detective, your cause is lost. This is your non-violent campaign. And so I ask every one of you not to retaliate but to bottle up all your rage, to dismiss your rage from you and you will rise braver men.

Therefore, I appeal to those who feel aggrieved to feel that they have done the right thing in forgetting it, and if they have not forgotten, I ask them to try to forget the thing ; and that is the object-lesson to which I wanted to draw your attention. If you want to carry this resolution, do not carry this resolution only by an acclamation for this resolution, but I want you to accompany the carrying out of this resolution with a faith and resolve which nothing on earth can move. That you are intent

upon getting swaraj at the earliest possible movement and that you are intent upon getting swaraj by means that are legitimate, that are honourable and by means that are non-violent, that are peaceful, you have resolved upon this thing : that so far we can say today, we cannot give battle to this Government by means of steel, but we can give battle by exercising what I have so often called soul-force and soul-force is not the prerogative of one man or a sannyasi or even a so-called saint. Soul-force is the prerogative of every human being, female or male, and therefore I ask my countrymen if they want to accept this resolution, to accept it with that firm determination and to understand that it is inaugurated under such good and favourable auspices as I have described you.

FROM STAUNCH LOYALIST TO A NON-CO-OPERATOR*

Before I read this statement I would like to state that I entirely endorse the learned Advocate-General's remarks in connection with my humble self. I think that he was entirely fair to me in all the statements that he has made, because it is very true and I have no desire whatsoever to conceal from this Court the fact that to preach disaffection towards the existing system of Government has become almost a passion with me, and the learned Advocate-General is also entirely in the right when he says that my preaching of disaffection did not commence with my connection with *Young India*, but that it commenced much earlier and in the statement that I am about to read, it will be my painful duty to admit before this Court that it commenced much earlier than the period stated by the Advocate-General. It is the most painful duty with me, but I have to discharge that duty knowing the responsibility that rests upon me, and I wish to endorse all the blame that the learned Advocate-General has thrown on my shoulders in connection with the Bombay, the Madras and the Chauri Chaura occurrences. Thinking over these deeply and sleeping over them night after night, it is impossible to dissociate

*Speech before the Sessions Court, Ahmedabad, March 18, 1922.

myself from the diabolical crimes of Chauri Chaura, or the mad outrages in Bombay and Madras. He is quite right when he says that, as a man of responsibility, a man having received a fair share of education and having had a fair share of experience of this world, I should know the consequences of every one of my acts. I know that I was playing with fire. I ran the risk and, if I was se free, I would still do the same I know that I was feeling it so every day and I have felt it also this morning that I would have failed in my duty if I did not say what I said here just now.

I wanted to avoid violence. I want to avoid violence. Non-violence is the first article of my faith. It is also the last article of my creed. But I had to make my choice. I had either to submit to a system which I considered had done an irreparable harm to my country, or incur the risk of the mad fury of my people bursting forth when they understood the truth from my lips. I know that my people have sometimes gone mad ; I am deeply sorry for it. I am, therefore here to submit not to a light penalty but to the highest penalty. I donot ask for mercy. I do not ask for any extenuating act of clemency. I am here to invite and cheerfully submit to the highest penalty that can be inflicted upon me for what in law is a deliberate crime and what appears to me to be the highest duty of a citizen. The only course open to you, the Judge, is, as I am just going to say in my statement, either to resign your post, or inflict on me the severest penalty, if you believe that the system and the law you are assisting to administer are good for the people of this country and that my activity is therefore injurious to the public weal. I donot expect that kind of conversion, but by the time I have finished with my statement, you will, perhaps, have a gimpse of what is raging within my breast to run this maddest risk that a sane man can run.

The statement was then read out.

Statement

I owe it perhaps to the Indian public and to the public in England, to placate which this prosecution is mainly taken up,

that I should explain why, from a staunch loyalist and co-operator I have become an uncompromising disaffectionist and non-co-operator. To the Court, too, I should say why I plead guilty to the charge of promoting disaffection towards the Government established by law in India.

My public life began in 1893 in South Africa in troubled weather. My first contact with British authority in that country was not of a happy character. I discovered that as a man and an Indian I had no rights. More correctly, I discovered that I had no rights as a man because I was an Indian.

But I was not baffled. I thought that his treatment of Indians was an excrescence upon a system that was intrinsically and mainly good. I gave the Government my voluntary and hearty co-operation, criticizing it freely where I felt it was faulty, but never wishing its destruction. Consequently, when the existence of the Empire was threatened in 1899 by the Boer challenge, I offered my services to it, raised a volunteer ambulance corps and served at several actions that took place for the relief of Ladysmith. Similarly in 1906, at the time of the Zulu revolt, I raised a stretcher-bearer party and served till the end of the rebellion. On both these occasions I received medals and was even mentioned in despatches. For my work in South Africa I was given by Lord Hardinge a Kaiser-i-Hind Gold Medal. When the War broke out in 1914 between Eng'and and Germany, I raised a volunteer ambulance corps in London consisting of the then resident Indians in London, chiefly students. Its work was acknowledged by the authorities to be valuable. Lastly, in India, when a special appeal was made at the War Conference in Delhi in 1918 by Lord Chlemsford for recruits, I struggled at the cost of my health to raise a corps in Kheda and the response was being made when the hostilities ceased and orders were received that no more recruits were wanted. In all these efforts at service, I was actuated by the belief that it was possible by such services to gain a status of full quality in the Empire for my countrymen.

The first shock came in the shape of the Rowlatt Act, a law designed to rob the people of all real freedom. I felt called upon to lead an intensive agitation against it. Then followed the Punjab horrors beginning with the massacre at Jallianwala Bagh and culminating in crawling orders, public floggings and other indescribable humiliations. I discovered, too, that the plighted word of the Prime Minister to the Mussalmans of India regarding the integrity of Turkey and the holy places of Islam was not likely to be fulfilled. But in spite of the forebodings and the grave warnings of friends at the Amritsar Congress in 1919, I fought for co-operation and working the Montagu-Chelmsford reforms, hoping that the Prime Minister would redeem his promise to the Indian Mussalmans, that the Punjab wound would be healed and that the reforms, inadequate and unsatisfactory though they were, marked a new era of hope in the life of India.

But all that hope was shattered. The Khilafat promise was not to be redeemed. The Punjab crime was white-washed and most culprits went not only unpunished, but remained in service and some continued to draw pensions from the Indian revenue ; not only did the reforms not mark a change of heart, but they were only a method of further draining India of her wealth and of prolonging her servitude.

I came reluctantly to the conclusion that the British connection had made India more helpless than she ever was before, politically and economically. A disarmed India has no power to resistance against any aggressor if she wanted to engage in an armed conflict with him. So much is this the case that some of our best men consider that India must take generations before she can achieve the Dominion Status. She has become so poor that she has little power of resisting famines. Before the British advent, India spun and wove in her millions of cottages just to supplement she needed for adding to her meagre agricultural resources. This cottage industry, so vital for India's existence, has been ruined by incredibly heartless and inhuman processes as described by English witnesses. Little do town-dwellers know how the semi-starved masses of India are slowly sinking to lifelessness. Little do they know

that their miserable comfort represents the brokerage they get for the work they do for the foreign exploiter, that the profits and the brokerage are sucked from the masses. Little do they realize that the Government established by law in British India is carried on for the exploitation of the masses. No sophistry, no jugglery in figures can explain away the evidence that the skeletons in many villages present to the naked eye. I have no doubt whatsoever that both England and the town-dwellers of India will have to answer, if there is a God above, for this crime against humanity which is perhaps unequalled in history. The law itself in this country has been used to serve the foreign exploiter. My unbiassed examination of the Punjab Martial Law cases has led me to believe that at least ninety-five per cent of convictions were wholly bad. My experience of political cases in India leads me to the conclusion that in nine out of every ten cases the condemned men were totally innocent. Their crime consisted in the love of their country. In ninety-nine cases out of hundred, justice has been denied to Indians as against Europeans in the Courts of India. This is not an exaggerated picture. It is the experience of almost every Indian who has had anything to do with such cases. In my opinion, the administration of the law is thus prostituted consciously or unconsciously for the benefit of the exploiter.

The greatest misfortunate is that Englishmen and their Indian associates in the administration of the country donot know that they are engaged in the crime I have attempted to describe. I am satisfied that many English and Indian officials honestly believe that they are administering one of the best systems devised in the world and that India is making steady, though slow, progress. They do not know that a subtle but effective system of terrorism and an organized display of force on the one hand and the deprivation of all powers of retaliation or self-defence on the other have emasculated the people and induced in them the habit of simulation. This lawful habit has added to the ignorance and the self-deception of the administrators. Section 124 A under which I am happily charged is perhaps the prince among the political sections of the Indian Penal Code designed to suppress the liberty of the citizen.

Affection cannot be manufactured or regulated by law. If one has no affection for a person or system, one should be free to give the fullest expression to one's disaffection, so long as one does not contemplate, promote or incite to violence. But the section under which Mr. Banker and I are charged is one under which mere promotion of disaffection is a crime. I have studied some of the cases tried under it, and I know that some of the most loved of India's patriots have been convicted under it. I consider it a privilege, therefore, to be charged under it. I have endeavoured to give in their briefest outline the reasons for my disaffection. I have no personal ill-will against any single administrator, much less can I have any disaffection towards the King's person. But I hold it to be a virtue to be disaffected towards a Government which in its totality has done more harm to India than any previous system. India is less manly under the British rule than she ever was before. Holding such a belief, I consider it to be a sin to have affection for the system And it has been a previous privilege for me to be able to write what I have in the various articles rendered in evidence against me.

In fact, I believe that I have rendered a service to India and England by showing in non-co-operation the way out of the unnatural state in which both are living. In my humble opinion, non-co-operation with evil is as much a duty as in co-operation with good. But, in the past, non-co-operation has been deliberately expressed in violence to the evil-doer. I am endeavouring to show to my countrymen that violent non-co-operation only multiplies evil and that, as evil can only be sustained by violence, withdrawal of support of evil requires complete abstention from violence. Non-violence implies voluntary submission to the penalty for non-co-operation with evil. I am here, therefore, to invite and submit cheerfully to the highest penalty that can be inflicted upon me for what in law is a deliberate crime and what appears to me to be the highest duty of a citizen. The only course open to you, the Judge, is either to resign your post and thus dissociate yourself from evil, if you feel that the law you are called upon to administer is an evil and that in reality I am innocent; or to

inflict on me the severest penalty if you believe that the system and the law you are assisting to administer are good for the people of this country and that my activity is, therefore, injurious to the public weal.

ON THE EVE OF DANDI MARCH*

In all probability this will be my last speech to you. Even if the Government allow me to march tomorrow morning, this will be my last speech on the sacred banks of the Sabarmati. Possibly these may be the last words of my life here.

I have already told you yesterday what I had to say. Today I shall confine myself to what you should do after my companions and I are arrested. The programme of the march to Jabalpur must be fulfilled as originally settled. The enlistment of the volunteers for this purpose should be confined to Gujarat only. From what I have seen and heard during the last fortnight, I am inclined to believe that the stream of civil resisters will flow unbroken.

But let there be not a semblance of breach of peace even after all of us have been arrested. We have resolved to utilize all our resources in the pursuit of an exclusively non-violent struggle. Let no one commit a wrong in anger. This is my hope and prayer. I wish these words of mine reach every nook and corner of the land. My task shall be done if I perish and so do my comrades. It will then be for the Working Committee of the Congress to show you the way and it will be up to you to follow its lead. So long as I have not reached Jabalpur, let nothing be done in contravention to the authority vested in me by the Congress. But once I am arrested, the whole responsibility shifts to the Congress. No one who believes in non-violence as a creed need, therefore, sit still. My compact with the Congress ends as soon as I am arrested. In that case there should be no slackness in the

*Speech at Sabarmati, March 11, 1930.

enrolment of volunteers. Wherever possible, civil dis-obedience of salt laws shouid be started. These laws can be violated in three ways. It is an offence to manufacture salt wherever there are facilities for doing so. The possession and sale of contraband salt, which includes natural salt or salt earth, are also an offence. The purchasers of such salt will be equally guilty. To carry away the natural salt deposits on the seashore is likewise violation of law. So is the hawking of such salt. In short, you may choose any one or all of these devices to break the salt monopoly.

We are, however, not to be content with this alone. There is no ban by the Congress and wherever the local workers have self-confidence, other suitable measures may be adopted. I stress only one condition, namely, let our pledge of truth and non-violence as the only means for the attainment of swaraj be faithfully kept For the rest, everyone has a free hand. But that does not give a licence to all and sundry to carry on their own responsibility. Where there are local leaders, their orders should be obeyed by the people. Where there are no leaders and only a handful of men have faith in the programme, they may do what they can, if they have enough self-confidence. They have a right, nay it is their duty, to do so. The history of the word is full of instances of men who rose to leadership by sheer force of self-confidence, bravery and tenacity. We, too, if we sincerely aspire to swaraj and are impatient to attain it should have similar self-confidence. Our ranks will swell and our hearts strengthen as the number of our arrests by the Government increases.

Much can be done in many other ways besides these. The liquor and foreign cloth shops can be picketed. We can refuse to pay taxes if we have the requisite strength. The lawyers can give up practice. The public can boycott the law courts by refraining from litigation. Government servants can resign their posts. In the midst of the despair reigning all round people quake with fear of losing employment. Such men are unfit for swaraj. But why this despair ? The number of Government servants in the country does not exceed a few

hundred thousand. What about the rest ? Where are they to go ? Even free India will not be able to accommodate a greater number of public servants. A collector then will not need the number of servants he has got today. He will be his own servant. Our starving millions can by no means afford this enormous expenditure. I, therefore, we are sensible enough, let us bid good-bye to Government employment, no matter if it is the post of a judge or a peon. Let, all who are co-operating with the Government in one way or another, be it by paying taxes, keeping titles, or sending children to official shools, etc., withdraw their co-operation in all or as many ways as possible. Then there are women who can stand shoulder to shoulder with men in this struggle.

You may take it as my will. It was the message that I desired to impart to you before starting on the march or for the jail. I wish that there should be no suspension or abandonment of the war that commences tomorrow morning or earlier, if I am arrested before that time, I shall eagerly await the news that ten batches are ready as soon as my batch is arrested. I believe there are men in India to complete the work begun by me. I have faith in the righteousness of our cause and the purity of our weapons. And where the means are clean, there God is undoubtedly present with His blessings. And where these three combine, there defeat is an impossibility. A stayagrahi, whether free or incarcerated, is ever victorious. He is vanquished only when he forsakes truth and non-violence and turns a deaf ear to the inner voice. If, therefore, there is such a thing as defeat for even a satyagrahi, he alone is the cause of it. God bless you all and keep off all obstacles from the path in the struggle that begins tomorrow.

STICK TO NON-VIOLENCE*

At last the long expected hour seems to have come.

In the dead of night, my colleagues and companions have roused me from deep slumber and requested me to give them

*Message to the nation, from Dandi, April 9, 1930.

a message. I am therefore giving this message, although I have not the slightest inclination to give any

Messages I have given enough already. Of what avail would this message be if none of the previous messages evoked a proper response? But information received until this midnight leads me to the belief that my message did not fall flat, but was taken up by the people in right earnest. The people of Gujarat seem to have risen in a body, as it were. I have seen with my own eyes thousands of men and women at Aat and Bhimard, fearlessly breaking the Salt Act. Not a sign of mischief, not a sign of violence have I seen, despite the presence of people in such large numbers. They have remained perfectly peaceful and non-violent, although Government officers have transgressed all bounds.

Here in Gujarat well-tried and popular public servants have been arrested one after another, and yet the people have been perfectly non-violent. They have refused to give way to panic, and have celebrated the arrests by offering civil disobedience in ever-increasing numbers. This is just as it should be.

If the struggle so auspiciously begun is continued in the same spirit of non-violence to the end, not only shall we see Purna Swaraj established in our country before long, but we shall have given to the world an object-lesson worthy of India and her glorious past.

Swaraj won without sacrifice cannot last long. I would, therefore, like our people to get ready to make the highest sacrifice that they are capable of. In true sacrifice all the suffering is on one side—one is required to master the art of getting killed without killing, of gaining life by losing it. May India live up to this mantra!

At present India's self-respect, in fact her all, is symbolized as it were in a handful of salt in the satyagrahi's hand. Let the fist holding it therefore be broken, but let there be no voluntary surrender of the salt.

Let the Government, if it claims to be a civilized Government, jail those who help themselves to contraband salt. After their arrest the civil resisters will gladly surrender the salt, as they will their bodies, into the custody of their jailors.

But by main force to snatch the salt from the poor, harmless satyagrahi's hands is barbarism pure and simple and an insult to India. Such insult can be answered only by allowing our hand to be fractured without loosening the grasp. Even then the actual sufferer or his comrades may not harbour in their hearts anger against the wrongdoer. Incivility should be answered not by incivility but by a dignified and calm endurance of all suffering in the name of God.

Let not my companions or the people at large be perturbed over my arrest, for it is not I but God Who is guiding this movement. He ever dwells in the hearts of all and He will vouchsafe to us the right guidance if only we have faith in Him. Our path has already been chalked out for us. Let every village fetch or manufacture contraband salt, sisters should picket liquor shops, opium dens and foreign cloth dealer's shops. Young and old in every home should ply the takli and spin and get woven heaps of yarn every day. Foreign cloth should be burnt, Hindus should eschew untouchability. Hindus, Mussalmans, Sikhs, Parsis and Christians should all achieve hear unity. Let the majority rest content with what remains after the minorities have been satisfied. Let students leave Government schools and colleges, and Government servants resign their service and devote themselves to the service of the people, and we shall find that Purna Swaraj will come knocking at our doors.

APPEAL TO THE CONSCIENCE OF THE WORLD*

In my opinion, the Indian Conference bears in its consequences not only upon India but upon the whole world. India

*Broadcast from the Columbia Broadcasting Service, Kingsley Hall. September 13, 1931.

is by itself almost a continent. It contains one-fifth of the human race. It represents one of the most ancient civilizations. It has traditions handed down from tens of thousands of years, some of which, to the astonishment of the world, remain intact. No doubt the ravages of time have affected the purity of that civilizaiion, as they have that of many other cultures and many institutions.

If India is to perpetuate the glory of her ancient past, it can do so only when it attains freedom. The reason for the struggle having drawn the attention of the world I know does not lie in the fact that we Indians are fighting for our liberty, but in fact that the means adopted by us for attaining that liberty are unique and, as far as history shows us, have not been adopted by any other people of whom we have any record.

The means adopted are not violence, not bloodshed, not diplomacy as one understands it now-a-days, but they are purely and simply truth and non-violence. No wonder that the attention of the world is directed towards this attempt to lead a successful, bloodless revolution. Hitherto, nations have fought in the manner of the brute. They have wreaked vengeance upon those whom they have considered to be their enemies.

We find in searching national anthems adopted by great nations that they contain imprecations upon the so-called enemy. They have vowed destruction and have not hesitated to take the name of God and seek divine assistance for the destruction of the enemy. We in India have reversed the process. We feel that the law that governs brute creation is not the law that should guide the human race. That law is inconsistent with human dignity.

I, personally, would wait, if need be, for ages rather than seek to attain the freedom of my country through bloody means. I feel in the innermost recesses of my heart, after a political experience extending over an unbroken period of close upon thirty-five years, that the world is sick unto death

of blood-spilling. The world is seeing a way out, and I flatter myself with the belief that perhaps it will be the privilege of the ancient land of India to show that way out to the hungering world.

I have, therefore, no hesitation whatsoever in inviting all the great nations of the earth to give their hearty co-operation to India in her mighty struggle. It must be a sight worth contemplating and treasuring that millions of people have given themselves to suffering without retaliation in order that they might vindicate the dignity and honour of the nation.

I have called that suffering a process of self-purification. It is my certain conviction that no man loses his freedom except through his own weakness. I am painfully conscious of our own weaknesses. We represent in India all the principal religions of the earth, and it is a matter of deep humiliation to confess that we are a house divided against itself; that we Hindus and Mussalmans are flying at one another. It is a matter of still deeper humiliation to me that we Hindus regard several millions of our own kith and kin as too degraded even for our touch. I refer to the so-called "untouchables."

These are no small weaknesses in a nation struggling to be free. You will find that in this struggle through self-purification, we have assigned a foremost part of our creed to the removal of this course of untouchability and the attainment of unity amongst all the different classes and communities of India representing the different creeds.

It is along the same lines that we seek to rid our land of the curse of drink. Happily for us, intoxicating drinks and drugs are confined to comparatively a very small number of people, largely factory hands and the like.

Fortunately for us the drink and drug curse is accepted as a curse. It is not considered to be the fashion for men or women to drink or to take intoxicating drugs. All the same,

it is an uphill fight that we are fighting in trying to remove this evil from our midst.

It is a matter of regret, deep regret, for me to have to say that the existing Government has made of this evil source very large revenue, amounting to nearly twenty-five crores of rupees. But I am thankful to be able to say that the women of India have risen to the occasion in combating it by peaceful means, that is, by a fervent appeal to those who are given to the drink habit to give it up, and by an equally fervent appeal to the liquor-dealers. A great impression has been created upon those who are addicted to these two evil habits.

I wish that it were possible for me to say that in this, at least, we were receiving hearty co-operation of the rulers. If we could only have received the co-operation without any legislation, I dare say that we would have achieved this reform and banished intoxicating drinks and drugs from our afflicted land.

There is a force which has a constructive effect and which has been put forth by the nation during this struggle. That is the great care for the semi-starved millions scattered throughout 7,00,000 villages dotted over a surface 1,900 miles long and 1,500 miles broad. It is a painful phenomenon that these simple villagers, through no fault of their own, have nearly six months of the year idle upon their hands.

The time was not very long ago when every village was self-sufficient in regard to the two primary human wants, food and clothing. Unfortunately for us, the East India Company, by means I would pefer not to describe, destroyed that supplementary village industry, and the millions of spinners who had become famous through the cunning of their deft fingers for drawing the finest thread, such as has never yet been drawn by any modern machinery. These village spinners found themselves one fine morning with their noble occupation gone. From that day forward India has become progressively poor.

No matter what may be said to the contrary, it is a historical fact that before the advent of the East India Company, these villagers were not idle, and he who wants may see today that these villagers are idle. It, therefore, required no great effort or learning to know that these villagers must starve if they cannot work for six months in the year.

May I not, then on behalf of these semi-starved millions, appeal to the conscience of the world to come to the rescue of a people dying for regaining its liberty ?

THE NATIONAL DEMAND*

I must confess at the outset that I am not a little embarassed in having to state before you the position of the Indian National Congress. I would like to say that I have come to London to attend this sub-committee as also the Round Table Conference, when the proper time comes, absolutely in the spirit of co-operation and to strive to my utmost to find points of agreement. I would like also to give this assurance to His Majesty's Government that at no stage is it, or will it be, my desire to embarass authority ; and I would like to give the same assurance to my colleagues here, that however much we may differ about our view-points, I shall not obstruct them in any shape or form. Therefore my position here depends entirely upon your goodwill as also the goodwill of His Majesty's Government. If at any time I found that I could not be of any useful service to the Conference, I would not hesitate to withdraw myself from it. I can also say to those who are responsible for the management of this Committee and the Conference that they have only to give a sign and I should have no hesitation in withdrawing.

I am obliged to make these remarks because I know that there are fundamental differences of opinion between the Government and the Congress, and it is possible that there are vital differences between my colleagues and myself, There

*Speech at the Federal Structure Committee meeting London, September 15, 1931.

is also a limitation under which I shall be working. I am but a poor humble agent acting on behalf of the Indian National Congress ; and it might be as well to remind ourselves of what the Congress stands for and what it is. You will then extend your sympathy to me, because I know that the burden that rests upon my shoulders is really very great.

What the Congress is

The Congress is, if I am not mistaken, the oldest political o·ganization we have in India It has had nearly 50 years of life during which period it has, without any interruption, held its annual session. It is what it means—national. It represents no peculiar community, no particular class, no particular interest. It claims to represent all-Indian interests and all classes. It is a matter of the greatest pleasure to me to state that it was first conceived in an English brain. Allan Octaviun Hume we knew as the father of the Congress. It was nursed by two great Parsis : Sir Pherozeshah Mehta and Dadabhai Naoroji, whom all India delighted to recognize as its Grand Old Man From the very commencement the Congress had Mussalmans, Christians, Anglo-Indians, I might say all religions, sects and communities represented upon it more or less fully. The late Badruddin Tyabji identified himself with the Congress. We have had Mussalmans and Parsis as presidents of the Congress. I can recall at least one Indian Christian president at the present moment : W.C. Bonnerji. Kalicharan Bannerji than whom I have not had the privilege of knowing a purer Indian was also throughly identified with the Congress. I miss, as I have no doubt all of you miss, the presence in our midst of Mr. T.K. Paul. Although he never officially belonged to the Congress, he was a nationalist to the full and a sympathizer of the Congress.

As you know, the late Maulana Muhammed Ali, whose presence also we miss today, was a president of the Congress, and at present we have four Mussalmans as members of the Working Committee which consists of 15 members. We have had women as our presidents : Dr. Annie Besant was the first, and Mrs. Sarojini Naidu followed. We have her as a

member of the Working Committee also : and so, if we have no distinctions of class or creeds, we have no distinctions of sex either.

The Congress has, from its very commencement, taken up the cause of the so called untouchables. There was a time when the Congress had at every annual section as its adjunct the Social Conference, to which the late Ranade had dedicated his energies among his many activities. Headed by him, you will find in the programme of the Social Conference reform in connection with the untouchables taking a prominent place. But in 1920 the Congress took a large step and brought the question of removal of untouchability as a plank on the political platform, and made it an important item of the political programme. Just as the Congress considered Hindu-Muslim unity, thereby meaning unity amongst all the great religions to be indispensable for the attainment of swaraj, so also did the Congress consider the removal of untouchablility as an indispensable condition for the attainment of full freedom.

The position the Congress took up in 1920 remains intact today, and so you will see that the Congress has attempted from its very beginning to be what it has described itself to be, namely, national in every sense of the term.

If your Highnesses will permit me to say it, in the very early stages, the Congress took up your cause also. Let me remind this Committee that it was the Grand Old Man of India who sponsored the cause of Kashmir and Mysore, and these two great Houses, I venture in all humility to submit, owe not a little to the efforts of Dadabhai Naoroji and the Congress. Even now the Congress has endeavoured to serve the Princes of India by refraining from any interference in their domestic and internal affairs.

I hope that this brief introduction that I thought fit to give will serve to enable the sub-committee and those who are interested in the claims of the Congress to understand that it has endeavoured to deserve the claim that it has made.

It has failed, I know, often to live up to the claim, but I venture to submit that if you were to examine the history of the Congress, you would find that it has more often succeeded and progressively succeeded than failed. Above all, the Congress represents in its essence the dumb semi-starved millions scattered over the length and breadth of the land in its seven hundred thousand villages, no matter whether they come from what is called British India or what is called Indian India. Every interest which, in the opinion of the Congress, is worthy of protection, has to subserve the interest of these dumb millions. You do find now and again an apparent clash between several interests. If there is a genuine and real clash, I have no hesitation in saying on behalf of the Congress that the Congress will sacrifice every interest for the sake of the interests of these dumb millions. It is therefore essentially a peasant organization or it is becoming so progressively. You and even the Indian members of the sub-committee will perhaps be astonished to find that today the Congress through its organization, the All-India Spinners' Association, is finding work for nearly 50,000 women in nearly 2,000 villages and these women are possibly 50 per cent Mussalman women. Thousands of them belong to the so-called untouchable classes. We have thus in this constructive manner penetrated these villages and the effort is being made to cover every one of the 7,00,000 villages. It is a superhuman task but if human effort can do so, you will presently find Congress covering all of these villages and bringing to them the message of the spinning-wheel.

The Congress Demand

This being the representative character of the Congress, you will not be assonished when I read to you the Congress mandate. I hope that it may not jar upon you. You may consider that the Congress is making a claim which is wholly untenable. Such as it is, I am here to put forth that claim on behalf the Congress in the gentlest manner possible but also in the firmest manner possible. I have come here to prosecute that claim with all the faith and energy that I can

command. If you can convince me to the contrary and show that the claim is inimical to the interests of these dumb millions, I shall revise my opinion. I am open to conviction but even so I should have to ask my principals to consent to that revision before I could usefully act as the agent of the Congress. At this stage I propose to read to you this mandate so that you can understand clearly the limitations imposed upon me.

This was a resolution passed at the Karachi session of the Indian National Congress.

"This Congress, having considered the provisional settlement between the Working Committee and the Government of India, endorses it and desires to make it clear that the Congress goal of Purna Swaraj, meaning complete independence, remains intact. In the event of a way remaining otherwise open to the Congress to be represented at any conference with the representatives of the British Government, the Congress delegation will work for this goal and in particula so as to give the nation control over the army, external affairs, finance, fiscal and economic policy and to have a scrutiny by an impartial tribunal of the financial transactions of the British Government in India, to examine and assess the obligation to be undertaken by India or England and the right for either party to end the partnership at will provided, however, that the Congress delegation will be free to accept such adjustments as may be demonstrably necessary in the interests of India.

Then follows the appointment. I have in the light of this mandate endervoured to study as carefully as I was capable of studying the provisional conclusions arrived at by the several sub-committees appointed by the Round Table Conference. I have also carefully studied the Prime Minister's statement giving the considered policy of His Majesty's Government. I speak subject to correction but, so far as I have been able to understand, this document falls short of what is aimed at and claimed by the Congress. True, I have the liberty to accept such adjustments as may be demonstrably

in the interests of India, but they have all to be consistent with the fundamentals stared in this mandate.

I remind myself at this stage of the terms of what is to me a sacred settlement—the settlement arrived at Delhi between the Government of India and the Congress. In the settlement the Congress has accepted the principle of federation : the principle that there should be responsibility at the centre, and has accepted also the principle that there should be safeguards in so far as they may be necessary in the interests of India.

Equal Partnership

There was one phrase used yesterday, I forget by which delegate, but it struck me very forcibly. He said : "We do not want a merely political constitution." I do not know that he gave that expression the same meaning that it immediately bore to me; but I immediately said to myself, this phrase has given me a good expression. It is true the Congress will not be and, personally speaking, I myself would never be, satisfied with a mere political constitution which, to read, would seem to give India all she can possibly politically desire but in reality would give her nothing. If we are intent upon complete independence it is not from any sense of arrogance, it is not because we want to parade before the universe that we have now severed all connection with the British people. Nothing of the kind. On the contrary you find in this mandate itself that the Congress contemplates a partnership, the Congress contemplates a connection with the British people, but that connection should be such as can exist between two absolute equals. Time was when I prided myself on being, and being called, a British subject. I have ceased for many years to call myself a British subject: I would far rather be called a rebel more than a subject: but I have now aspired, I still aspire, to be a citizen not in the Empire but in a Commonwealth. in a partnership if possible; if God wills it, an indissoluble partnership but not a partnership superimposed upon one nation by another. Hence you find here that the Congress claims that either party should have the

right to sever this connection, to dissolve the partnership. It has got to be necessarily therefore of mutual benefit. May I say—it may be irrelevant to the consideration but not irrelevant to me—that as I have said elsewhere. I can quite understand responsible British statesmen today being wholly engrossed in domestic affairs in trying to make both ends meet. We could not expect them to do anything less, and I felt, even as I was sailing towards London, whether we, in the sub committee at the present moment, would not be interlopers. And yet, I said to myself, it is possible that we might not be interlopers, it is possible that the British Ministers themselves might consider the proceedings of the Round Table Conference to be of primary importance even in terms of their domestic affairs. Yes, India can be held by the sword. But what will conduce to the prosperity of Great Britain and the economic freedom of Great Britain—an enslaved but a rebellious India, or an India, an esteemed partner with Britain to share her sorrows, to take part side by side with Britain in her misfortunes ?

My Dream

Yes, if need be, but at her own will, to fight side by side with Britain, not for the exploitation of a single race or a single human being on earth, but it may be conceivably for the good of the whole world. If I want freedom for my country, believe me, if I can possibly help it, I do not want that freedom in order that I, belonging to a nation which counts one-fifths of the human race, may exploit any other race upon earth, or any single individual. I want that freedom for my country, I would not be deserving of that freedom if I did not cherish and treasure the equal right of every other race—weak or strong—to the same freedom. And so I said to myself, whilst I was nearing the shores of your beautiful Island that, perchance it might be possible for me to convince the British Ministers that India as a valuable partner, not held by force but by the silken cord of love, an India of that character might be conceivably of real assistance to you in balancing your budget not for one year but for many years. What cannot the two nations do—one

a handful but brave, with a record for bravery perhaps unsurpassed, a nation noted for having fought slavery, a nation that has at lest claimed times without number to protect the weak—and another a very ancient nation, counted in millions, with a glorious and ancient past, representing at the present moment two great cultures—the Islamic and the Hindu culture—and if you will, also containing not a small but a very large Christian population, and certainly absorbing the where of the splendid Zoroastrian stock, in numbers almost unequalled, certainly unsurpased ? We have got all these cultures concentrated in India, and supposing that God fires both Hindus and Mussalmans represented here with a proper spirit so that they close their ranks and come to an honourable understanding, take that nation and this nation together, I again ask myself and ask you whether with an India free, completely independent as Great Britain is, an honourable partnership between these two nations cannot be mutually beneficial even in terms of the domestic affairs of this great nation. And so, in that dreamy hope I have approached the British Isles, and I shall still cherish that dream.

And when I have said this perhaps I have said all, and you will be able to dot the i's and cross the t's not expecting me to fill in all the details and tell you what I mean by control over the army, what I mean by control over external affairs, finance, fiscal and economic policy, or even the financial transactions which a friend yesterday considered to be sacrosanct. I do not take that view. If there is a stock-taking between incoming and outgoing partners, their transactions are subject to audit and adjustment, and the Congress will not be guilty of any dishonourable conduct or crime in saying that the nation should understand what it is taking over and what it should not take over. This audit, this scrutiny, is asked for not merely in the interests of India ; it is asked for in the interests of both. I am positive that the British people do not want to saddle upon India a single burden which it should not legitimately bear, and I am here to declare on behalf of the Congress that the Congress will never think of repudiating a single claim or a burden that it should justly

discharge. If we are to live as an honourable nation worthy of commanding credit from the whole world, we will pay every farthing of legitimate debt with our blood.

I do not think I should take you any further through the clauses of this mandate and analyse for you the meaning of these clauses as Congressmen give them. If it is God's will that I should continue to take part in these deliberations, as the deliberations proceed, I shall be able to explain the implications of these clauses. As the deliberations proceed, I would have my say in connection with the safeguards also. But I think I have said quite enough in having, with some elaboration and with your generous indulgence, Lord Chancellor, taken the time of this meeting. I had not intended really to take that time, but I felt that I could not possibly do justice to the cause I have come to expound to you, the sub committee, and to the British nation of which we the Indian delegation are at present the guests, if I did not give you out of the whole of my heart my cherished wish even at this time. I would love to go away from the shores of the British Isles with the conviction that there was to be an honourable and equal partnership between Great Britain and India.

I cannot do anything more than say that it will be my fervent prayer during all the days that I live in your midst that this consummation may be reached. I thank you, Lord Chancellor, for the courtesy that you have extended to me in not stopping me, although I have taken close upon forty-five minutes. I was not entitled to all that indulgence and I thank you once more.

THE WRITING ON THE WALL*

I do not think that anything that I can say this evening can possibly influence the decision of the Cabinet. Probably the decision has been already taken. Matters of liberty of

Speech in the plenary session of the Round Table Conference, London, December 1, 1931.

practically a whole Continent can hardly be decided by mere agrumentation, or even negotiation. Negotiation has its play, but only under certain conditions. Without those conditions, negotiations are a fruitless task. But I do not want to go into all these matters. I want as far as possible to confine myself within the four corners of the conditions that you, Mr. Prime Minister, read to this Congress at its opening meeting. I would, therefore, first of all say a few words in connection with the reports that have been submitted to this Conference. You will find in these reports that generally it has been stated that such and such is the opinion of a large majority; some, however, have expressed an opinion to the contrary, and so on. Parties who have dissented have not been stated. I had heard when I was in India, and I was told when I came here, that no decision or decisions would be taken by the ordinary rule of majority, and I do not want to mention this fact here by way of complaint that the reports have been so framed as if the proceedings were governed by the test of majority.

But it was necessary for me to mention this fact, because on most of these reports you will find that there is a dissenting opinion, and in most of the cases that dissent unfortunately happens to belong to me. It was not a matter of joy to have dissent from fellow delegates. But I felt that I could not truly represent the Congress unless I had notified that dissent.

There is another thing which I want to bring to the notice of this Conference, namely, what is the meaning of the dissent of the Congress? I said at one of the preliminary meetings of the Federal Structure Committee that the Congress claimed to represent over 85 per cent of the population of India, that is to say, the dumb, toiling, semi-starved millions. But I went further: that the Congress claimed also, by right of service, to represent even the Princes, if they would pardon my putting forth that claim, and the landed gentry, and the educated class. I with to repeat that claim and I wish this evening to emphasize that claim.

All the other parties at this meeting represent sectional interests. The Congress alone claims to represent the whole of India all interests. It is no communal organization ; it is a determined enemy of communalism in any shape or form. The Congress knows no distinction of race, colour or creed; its platform is universal. It may not always have lived up to its creed. I do not know a single human organization that lives up to its creed. The Congress has failed very often to my knowledge. It may have failed more often to the knowledge of its critics. But the worst critics will have to recognize, as it has been recognized, that the Indian National Congress is a daily growing organization, that its message penetrates the remotest village of India, that on given occasions the Congress has been able to demonstrate its influence over and among these masses who inhabit its 7,00,000 villages.

And yet, here I see that the Congress is treated as one of the parties. I do not mind it ; I do not regard it as a calamity for the Congress ; but I do regard it as a calamity for the purpose of doing the work for which we have gathered together here. I wish I could convince all the British public-men, the British Ministers, that the Congress is capable of delivering the goods. The Congress is the only all-India national organization, bereft of any communal bias ; that it does represent all minorities which have lodged their claim--I hold unjustifiably—to represent 46 per cent of the population of India. The Congress, I say, claims to represent all these minorities.

What a great difference it would be today if this claim on behalf of the Congress was recognized. I feel that I have to state this claim with some degree of emphasis on behalf of peace, for the sake of achieving the purpose which is common to all of us, to you Englishmen who sit at this table and to us the Indian men and women who also sit at this table. I say so for this reason : The Congress is a powerful organization ; the Congress is an organization which has been accused of running or desiring to run a parallel Government ; and in a way I have endorsed the charge. If you could understand the working of the Congress, you would welcome an organization

which could run a parallel Government and show that it is possible for an organization, voluntary, without any force at its command, to run the machinery of Government even under adverse circumstances.

But no. Although you have invited the Congress, you distrust the Congress. Although you have invited the Congress, you reject its claim to represent the whole of India. Of course, it is possible at this end of the world to dispute that claim, and it is not possible for me to prove this claim; but, all the same, if you find me asserting that claim, I do so because a tremendous responsibility rests upon my shoulders.

The Way of Negotiation

The Congress represents the spirit of rebellion. I know that the word 'rebellion' must not be whispered at a Conference which has been summoned in order to arrive at an agreed solution of India's troubles through negotiation. Speaker after speaker has got up and said that India should achieve her liberty through negotiation, by argument, and that it will be the greatest glory of Great Britain if Great Britain yields to India's demands by argument. But the Congress does not hold quite that view. The Congress has an alternative which is unpleasant to you.

The Old War

I heard several speakers. I have tried to follow every speaker with the utmost attention and with all the respect that I could possibly give to these speakers saying what a dire calamity it would be if India was fired with the spirit of lawlessness, rebellion, terrorism and so on. I do not pretend to have read history, but as a school boy I had to pass a paper in history also, and I read that the page of history is soiled red with the blood of those who fought for freedom. I do not know an instance in which nations have attained their own without having to go through an incredible measure of travail. The dagger of the assassin, the poison bowl, the bullet of the rifleman, the spear and all these weapons and methods

of destruction have been up to now used by, what I consider, blind lovers of liberty and freedom. And the historian has not condemned them. I hold no brief for the terrorists. Mr. Ghaznavi brought in the terrorists and he brought in the Calcutta Corporation. I felt hurt when he mentioned an incident that took place at the Calcutta Corporation. He forgot to mention that the Mayor of that Corporation made handsome reparation for the error into which he himself was betrayed, and the error into which the Calcutta Corporation was betrayed, through the instrumentality of those members of the Corporation who were Congressmen.

I hold no brief for Congressmen who directly or indirectly would encourage terrorism. As soon as this incident was brought to the notice of the Congress, the Congress set about putting it in order. It immediately called upon the Mayor of the Calcutta Corporation to give an account of what was done and the Mayor, the gentleman that he is, immediately admitted his mistake and made all the reparation that it was then legally possible to make. I must not detain this Assembly over this incident for any length of time. He mentioned also a verse which the children of the forty schools conducted by the Calcutta Corporation are supposed to have recited. There were many other mis-statements in the speech which I could dwell upon, but I have no desire to do so. It is only out of regard for the great Calcutta Corporation, and out of regard for truth, and on behalf of those who are not here tonight to put in their defence, that I mention these two glaring instances. I do not for one moment believe that this was taught in the Calcutta Corporation schools with the knowledge of the Calcutta Corporation. I do not know that in those terrible days of last year several things were done for which we have regret, for which we have made reparation.

If our boys in Calcutta were taught those verses which Mr. Ghaznavi has recited, I am here to tender an apology on their behalf, but I should want it proved that the boys were taught by the schoolmasters of these schools with the knowledge and encouragement of the Corporation. Charges of this nature have been brought against Congress times without

number, and times without number these charges have also been refuted, but if I have mentioned these things at this juncture, it is again to show that for the sake of liberty people have fought, people have lost their lives, people have killed and have sought death at the hands of those whom they have sought to oust.

The New Way

The Congress then comes upon the scene and devises a new method not known to history, namely, that of civil disobedience and the Congress has been following up that method. But again, I am up against a stone wall and I am told that it is a method that no Government in the world will tolerate. Well, of course, the Government may not tolerate, no Government has tolerated open rebellion. No Government may tolerate civil disobedience, but Governments have to succumb even to these forces, as the British Government has done before now, even as the great Dutch Government after eight years of trial had to yield to the logic of facts. General Smuts, a brave general, a great statesman, and a very hard taskmaster also, but he himself recoiled with horror from even the contemplation of doing to death innocent men and women who were merely fighting for the preservation of their self-respect. Things which he had vowed he would never yield in the year 1908, reinforced as he was by General Botha, he had to do in the year 1914 after having tried these civil resisters through and through. And in India, Lord Chelmsford had to do the same thing. The Governor of Bombay had to do the same thing in Borsad and Bardoli. I suggest to you, Mr. Prime Minister, it is too late today to resist this and it is this thing which weighs me down, this choice that lies before them, the parting of the ways probably. I shall hope against hope, I shall strain every nerve to achieve an honourable settlement for my country, if I can do so without having to put the millions of my countrymen and countrywomen, and even childern, through this ordeal of fire. It can be a matter of no joy and comfort to me to lead them again to a fight of that character, but, if a further ordeal of fire has to be our lot, I shall approach that with the greatest joy and with the greatest consolation that I was doing what I felt to be

right, the country was doing what it felt to be right and the country will have the additional satisfaction of knowing that it was not at least taking lives, it was giving lives : it was not making the British people directly suffer, it was suffering. Professor Gilbert Murray told me—I shall never forget that, I am paraphrasing his inimitable language—"Do you not consider for one moment that we Englishmen do not suffer when thousands of your countrymen suffer, that we are so heartless ?" I do not think so, I do not know that you will suffer but I want you to suffer because I want to touch your hearts; and when your hearts have been touched then will come the psychological moment for negotiotion. Negotiation there always will be ; and if this time I have travelled all these miles in order to enter upon negotiation. I thought that your countrymen, Lord Irwin, had sufficiently tried us through his ordinances, that he had sufficient evidence that thousands of men and women of India and thousands of children had suffered ; and that, ordinance or no ordinance, lathis or no lathis, nothing would avail to stem the tide that was onrushing and to stem the passions that were rising in the breasts of the men and women of India who were thirsting for liberty.

The Price

Whilst there is yet a little sand left in the glass, I want you to understand what this Congress stands for. My life is at your disposal. The lives of all the the members of the Working Committee, the All-India Congress Committee, are at your disposal. But remember that you have at your disposal the lives of all these dumb millions. I do not want to sacrifice those lives if I can possibly help it. Therefore, please remember that I will count no sacrifice too great if, by chance, I can pull through an honourable settlement. You will find me always having the greatest spirit of compromise if I can but fire you with the spirit that is working in the Congress, namely, that India must have real liberty. Call it by any name you like ; a rose will smell as sweet by any other name, but it must be the rose of liberty that I want and not the artificial product. If your mind and the Congress mind, the mind of this Conference and the mind of the British people, means the same thing by

the same word, then you will find the amplest room for compromise, and you will find the Congress itself always in a compromising spirit. But so long as there is not that one mind that one definition, not one implication for the same word that you and I and we may be using, there is no compromise possible. How can there be any compromise when each one of us has a different definition for the same words that we may be using? It is impossible, Mr. Prime Minister, I want to suggest to you in all humility, that it is utterly impossible then to find a meeting ground, to find a ground where you can apply the spirit of compromise. And I am very grieved to have to say up to now I have not been able to discover a common definition for the terms that we have been exchanging during all these weary weeks.

Our Goal

I was shown last week the Statute of Westminster by a sceptic, and he said, "Have you seen the definition of Dominion?" I read the definition of "Dominion" and naturally I was not at all perplexed or shocked to see that the word 'Dominion' was exhaustively defined and it had not a general definition but a particular definition. It simply said : the word 'Dominion' shall include Australia, South Africa, Canada and so on ending with the Irish Free State. I do not think I noticed Egypt there. Then he said, "Do you see what your Dominion means?" It did not make any impression upon me. I do not mind what my Dominion means or what complete independence means. In a way I was relieved.

I said I am now relieved from having to quarrel about the word 'Dominion', because I am out of it. But I want complete independence, and even so, so many Englishmen have said. "Yes, you can have complete independence, but what is the meaning of complete independence?" and again we come to different definitions.

One of your great statesmen was debating with me, and said : "Honestly I did not know that you meant this by complete independence." He ought to have known but he did not know, and I shall tell you what he did not know. When I said

to him : "I cannot be a partner in an Empire," he said : "Of course, that is logical." I replied : "But I want to become that. It is not as if I shall be if I am compelled to but I want to become a partner with Great Britain. I want to become a partner with the English people ; but I want to enjoy precisely the same liberty that your people enjoy, and I want to seek this partnership not merely for the benefit of India, and not merely for mutual benefit ; I want to seek this partnership in order that the great weight that is crushing the world to atoms may be lifted from its shoulders."

This took place ten or twelve days ago. Strange as it may appear, I got a note from another Englishman, whom also you know, and whom also you respect. Among many things, he writes : "I believe profoundly that the peace and happiness of mankind depend on our friendship ;" and, as if I would not understand that, he says : "Your people and mine," I must read to you what he also says : "And of all Indians, you are the one that the real Englishman likes and understands."

He does not waste any words on flattery, and I do not think he has intended this last expression to flatter me. It will not flatter me in the slightest degree. There are many things in this note which, if you understand better the significance of this expression, but let me tell you that when he writes this last sentence he does not mean me personally. I personally signify nothing, and I know I would mean nothing to any single Englishman : but I mean something to some Englishmen because I represent a cause, because I seek to represent a nation, a great organization which has made itself. That is the reason why he says this.

But then, if I could possibly find that working basis, Mr. Prime Minister, there is ample room for compromise. It is for friendship I crave. My business is not to throw overboard the slave-holder and tyrant. My philosophy forbids me to do so, and today the Congress has accepted that philosophy, not as a creed, as it is to me, but as a policy, because the Congress believes that is the right and the best thing for India, a nation of 350 millions to do.

Our Weapon

A nation of 350 million people does not need the danger of the assassin, it does not need the poison bowl, it does not need the sword, the spear or the bullet. It needs simply a will of its own, an ability to say 'no', and that nation is today learning to say 'no'.

But what is it that the nation does ? To summarily, or at all, dismiss Englishmen ? No. Its mission is today to convert Englishmen. I do not want to break the bond between England and India, but I do want to transform that bond. I want to transform that slavery into complete freedom for my country. Call it complete independence or whatever you like, I will not quarrel about the word, and even though my countrymen may dispute with me for having taken some other word, I shall be able to bear down that opposition so so long as the content of the word that you may suggest to me bears the same meaning. Hence, I have times without number to urge upon your attention that the safeguards that have been suggested are completely unsatisfactory. They are not in the interests of India.

Financial Cramp

Three experts from the Federation of Commerce and Industry have, in their own way, each in his different manner, told out of their expert experiences how utterly impossible it is for any body of responsible Ministers to tackle the problem of administration when 30 per cent of her resources are mortgaged irretrievably. Better than I could have shown to you they have shown out of the amplitude of their knowledge what these financial safeguards mean for India. These mean the complete cramping of India. They have discussed at this table financial safeguards but that include necessarily the question of Defence and the question of the Army. Yet while I say that the safeguards are unsatisfactory as they have been presented, I have not hesitated to say, and I do not hesitate to repeat that the Congress is pledged to giving safeguards, endorsing safeguards which may be demonstrated to be in the interest of India.

At one of the sittings of the Federal Structure Committee I had no hesitation in amplifying the admission and saying that those safeguards must be also of benefit to Great Britain. I do not want safeguards which are merely beneficial to India and prejudicial to the real interests of Great Britain. The fancied interests of India will have to be sacrificed. The fancied interests of Great Britain will have to be sacrificed. The illegitimate interests of India will have to be sacrificed. The illegitimate interests of Great Britain will also have to be sacrificed. Therefore, again I repeat, if we have the same meaning for the same word, I will agree with Mr. Jayakar, with Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru and other distinguished speakers who have spoken at this Conference.

I will agree with them all that we have, after all these labours, reached a substantial measure of agreement, but my despair, my grief, is that I do not read the same words in the same light. The implications of the safeguards of Mr. Jayakar, I very much fear, are different from my implications, and the implications of Mr Jayakar and myself are perhaps only different from the implications that Sir Samuel Hoare, for instance, has in mind ; I do not know. We have never really come to grips. We have never got down to brass tracks, as you put it, and I am anxious—I have been pining—to come to real grips and to get down to brass tracks all these days and all these nights, and I have felt : why are we not coming nearer and nearer together, and why are we wasting our time in eloquence, in oratory, in debating, and in scoring points ? Heaven knows, I have no desire to take part in any debating. I know that liberty is made of sterner stuff, and I know that the freedom of India is made of much sterner stuff. We have problems that would baffle any statesman. We have problems that other nations have not to tackle. But they do not baffle me ; they cannot baffle those who have been brought up in the Indian climate. Those problems are there with us. Just as we have to tackle bubonic plague, we have to tackle the problem of malaria. We have to tackle, as you have not, the problem of snakes and scorpions, monkeys, tigers and lions. We have to tackle these problems because we have been brought up under them.

They do not baffle us. Somehow or other we have survived the ravages of these venomous reptiles and various creatures. So also shall we survive our problems and find a way out of those problems. But today you and we have come together at a Round Table and we want to find a common formula which will work. Please believe me that whilst I abate not a little of the claim that I have registered on behalf of the Congress, which I do not propose to repeat here, while I withdraw not one word of the speeches that I had to make at the Federal Structure Committee, I am here to compromise ; I am here to consider every formula that British ingenuity can prepare, every formula that the ingenuity of such constitutionalists as Mr. Sastri, Dr. Tej Bahadur Sapru, Mr. Jayakar, Mr. Jinnah, Sir Muhammad Shafi and a host of others can weave into being.

Mutual Trust

I will not be baffled. I shall be here as long as I am required because I do not want to revive civil disobedience. I want to turn the truce that was arrived at in Delhi into a permanent settlement. But for heaven's sake give me, a frail man 62 years gone, a little bit of a chance. Find a little corner for him and the organization that he represents. You distrust that organization though you may seemingly trust me. Not for one moment differentiate me from the organization of which I am but a drop in the ocean. I am no greater than the organization to which I belong. I am infinitely smaller than that organization : and if you find me a place, if you trust me, I invite you to trust the Congress also. Your trust in me otherwise is a broken reed. I have no authority save what I derive from the Congress. If you will work the Congress for all it is worth, then you will say good-bye to terrorism ; then you will not need terrorism. Today you have to fight the school of terrorists which is there with your disciplined and organized terrorism, because you will be blind to the facts or the writing on the wall. Will you not see the writing that these terrorists are writing with their blood ? Will you not see that we do not want bread of wheat, but we want the bread of liberty ; and without that

liberty there are thousands today who are sworn not to give themselves peace or to give the country peace ?

I urge you then to read that writing on the wall. I ask you not to try the patience of a people known to be proverbially patient. We speak of the mild Hindu, and the Mussalman also by contact good or evil with the Hindu has himself become mild. And the mention of the Mussalman reminds me that the problem exists here, and I repeat what I used so say in India—I have not forgotten those words—that without the problem of minorities being solved, there is no swaraj for India, there is no freedom for India. I know and I realize it ; and yet I came here in the hope 'perchance' that I might be able to pull through a solution here. But I do not despair, some day or other, finding a real and living solution in connection with the minorities problem. I repeat what I have said elsewhere that so long as the wedge in the shape of foreign rule divides community from community and class from class, there will be no real living solution, there will be no living friendship between these communities.

It will be after all and at best a paper solution. But immediately you withdraw that wedge the domestic ties, the domestic affections, the knowledge of common birth—do you suppose that all these will count for nothing ?

Were Hindus and Mussalmans and Sikhs always at war with one another when there was no British rule, when there was no English face seen there ? We have chapter and verse given to us by Hindu historians and by Mussalman historians to say that we were living in comparative peace even then. And Hindus and Mussalmans in the villages are not even today quarrelling. In those days they were not known to quarrel at all. The late Maulana Muhammad Ali often used to tell me, and he was himself a bit of an historian—'If God' —'Allah' as he called out—'give me life, I propose to write the history of Mussalman rule in India ; and then I will show, through documents that British people have preserved, that Aurangzeb was not so vile as he has been painted by the British historian ; that the Mogul rule was not

so bad as it has been shown to us in British History', and so on. And so have Hindu historians written. This quarrel is not old ; this quarrel is coeval with this acute shame. I dare to say, it is coeval with the British advent and immediately this relationship, the unfortunate, artificial, unnatural relationship between Great Britain and India is transfomred into a natural relationship, when it becomes, if it does become, a voluntary partnership to be given up, to be dissolved at the will of either party, when it becomes that you will find that Hindus, Mussalmans, Sikhs, Européans, Anglo-Indians, Christians, Untouchables will all live together as one man.

I do not intend to say much tonight about the Princes, but I should be wronging them and should be wronging the Congress if I did not register my claim, not with the Round Table Conference but with the Princes. It is open to the Princes to give their terms on which they will join the Federation. I have appealed to them to make the path easy for those who inhabit the other part of India, and therefore, I can only make these suggestions for their favourable consideration, for their earnest consideration. I think that if they accepted, no matter what they are, but some fundamental right as the common property of all India, and if they accepted that position and allowed those rights to be tested by the Court, which will be again of their own creation, and if they introduced elements—only elements—of representation on behalf of their subjects, I think that they would have gone a long way to conciliate their subjects. They would have gone a long way to show to the world and to show to the whole of India that they are also fired with a democratic spirit, that they do not want to remain undiluted autocrats, but that they want to become constitutional monarchs even as King George of Great Britain is.

As Autonomous Frontier Province

Let India get what she is entitled to and what she can really take, but whatever she gets, and whenever she gets it, let the Frontier Province get complete autonomy today.

That Frontier will then be a standing demonstration to the whole of India, and therefore, the whole vote of the Congress will be given in favour of the Frontier Province getting Provincial Autonomy tomorrow. Mr. Prime Minister, if you can possibly get your Cabinet to endorse the proposition that from tomorrow the Frontier Province becomes a full-fledged autonomous province, I shall then have proper footing amongst the Frontier tribes and convene them to my assistance when those over the border cast an evil eye on India.

Thanks

Last of all, my last is a pleasant task for me. This is perhaps the last time that I shall be sitting with you at negotiations. It is not that I want that. I want to sit at the same table with you in your closets and to negotiate and to plead with you and to go down on bended knees before I take the final lead and final plunge.

But whether I have the good fortune to continue to tender my co-operation or not does not depend upon me. It largely depends upon you. But it may not even depend upon you. It depends upon so many circumstances over which neither you nor we may have any control whatsoever. Then, let me perform this pleasant task of giving my thanks to all from Their Majesties down to the poorest men in the East End where I have taken up my habitation.

In that settlement, which represents the poor people of the East End of London, I have become one of them. They have accepted me as a member, and as a favoured member of their family. It will be one of the richest treasures that I shall carry with me. Here, too, I have found nothing but courtesy and nothing but a genuine affection from all with whom I have come in touch. I have come is touch with so many Englishmen. It has been a priceless privilege to me. They have listened to what must have often appeared to them to be unpleasant, although it was true. Although I have often been obliged to say these things to them they have never

shown the slightest impatience or irritation. It is impossible for me to forget these things. No matter what befalls me, no matter what the fortunes may be of this Round Table Conference, one thing I shall certainly carry with me, that is, that from high to low I have found nothing but the utmost courtesy and the utmost affection. I consider that it was well worth my paying this visit to England in order to find this human affection.

It has enhanced, it has deepened my irrepressible faith in human nature that although Englishmen and English women have been fed upon lies that I see so often disfiguring your Press, that although in Lancashire, the Lancashire people had perhaps some reason for becoming irritated against me, I found no irritation and no resentment even in the operatives. The operatives, men and women, hugged me. They treated me as one of their own. I shall never forget that.

I am carrying with me thousands upon thousands of English friendships. I do not know them but I read that affection in their eyes as early in the morning I walk through your streets. All this hospitality, all this kindness will never be effaced from my memory, no matter what befalls my unhappy land. I thank you for your forbearance.

HOPES OF CO-OPERATION DASHED TO PIECES*

Last night I was expecting that I would be able to speak before you something different than what I propose to do now. But evidently God has willed otherwise. I did not know till I landed this morning that there had been firing in Peshawar, nor did I know that Pandit Jawaharlal and Sjt. Sherwani were jailed or were to be prosecuted. I take these as Christmas presents to me from Lord Willingdon. It was natural that he should have made presents to me on my return home. In the Frontier Province Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan, his brother and several others have been arrested and we do not know how many more will be jailed. We may not

*Speech at a public meeting, Bombay, December 28, 1931.

even get the news from that Province. What better presents can there be for a satyagrahi than these.

If we had committed any offence and were punished for that, there would have been occasion for us to regret it. But I am as certain as there is life in me that Khan Abdul Ghaffar is a true believer in the cult of satyagraha and he has understood its meaning. I need say nothing about Pandit Jawaharlal and Sjt. Sherwani. You know them as much as I do.

The question now before us is what is our duty. Shall we take the hint from the action of the Government and launch a campaign of satyagraha or shall we try some other means ? I cannot give you my opinion just at present.

I will only say that if fate wills that we should go through the ordeal again, and if the Congress Working Committee decides on the renewal of the fight. I shall not hesitate to ask you to join it. But if there is any possibility of avoiding satyagraha, I shall do my utmost to prevent it and advise you to have patience. I think after years of experience India has learnt to hold herself in patience.

No Justification for Ordinance

I was grieved to learn on board the steamer that in Bengal, two of our young girls are said to have committed a murder. It pained me as a satyagrahi, because our creed is to be ready to die and not to kill. Our fight is based on love. Even if we fight the Government, it is with the weapon of love and there can be no room for hatred in it. When I heard of that incident I was sorry but that does not mean that there is the least justification for what the Government has been doing in Bengal. A Government has every right to punish the wrong-doers but it does not behove a Government to victimize people for acts for which they are not responsible. There can be no justification for the ordinances promulgated in the U.P. or the North-West Frontier Province. We cannot tolerate any of them.

I had hoped that it would be possible to find a way to co-operate with the Government. I will even now do my best to find a way out. But I must admit the signs that I have noticed have considerably weakened my hopes. And if ever we have to fight we should be prepared to do our utmost. Ours is a fight in which one and all can join. It is a fight to court sufferings. It is a struggle to give life and not to take life. In this struggle even children can play a part.

Stick to Non-Violence

Last year we faced lathis, but this time we must be prepared to face bullets. I do not wish that the Pathans in the Frontier alone should court bullets. If bullets are to be faced, Bombay and Gujarat also must take their shares. I had said in London that if we have to offer even a million lives for achieving freedom, I would be prepared for sacrifice without the least compunction. I believe that we must get rid of the fear of death, and when we have to court death we must embrace it as we embrace a friend. But in spite of our readiness to offer our lives, we must see to it that not even a hair of an Englishman is hurt. We must hope that by our sacrifice we shall be able to bring about a change of heart in the same Englishman who strikes us.

By my visit to Europe, my faith in non-violence has immensely increased. I believe that non-violence has the power to melt the stoniest heart. Some people thought that during my visit to Europe I would learn something new, but I honestly say that I learnt nothing new except that may faith in non-violence increased.

Another experience that I got during my visit to London was that the British Cabinet believes—and there is no reason to doubt its sincerity—that we are not fit for self-government. They believe that although the Congressmen speak of non-violence, they do not honestly believe in it. The reason is that in the reports they get from their officials in India, it is represented that Indians are unfit for self-government, and that Congress has no control over the masses. That is why they have been declaring Congress organization unlawful. Our

duty is not to find fault with the Englishman nor to be angry with him, but to get rid of our shortcomings and to act up to the creed of non-violence.

May be that many of you have accepted it as a policy, but so long as the Congress has adopted that creed, we must stick fast to it. By our actions we must prove beyond doubt that we, Congressmen, exist not to harm anyone but to protect others at the cost of our own lives. The Congress stands to achieve freedom by sacrificing lives. Those who do not subscribe to that view had better leave the Congress. It we do that, we shall enhance the influence and reputation that we have earned, and if we lose it, we will not be able to attain freedom.

If we have not so far been able to attain swaraj, it does not mean that we should give up the attempt. India has not only to attain her freedom but also to give the message of peace and non-violence to the world. Even if years are required to achieve that object, it should not dishearten us.

Satyagraha—The Weapon

I hear people saying that if the Congress gave up satyagraha it will be able to deal with the Government. I must make it clear that the Congress and satyagraha are inseparable. In satyagraha lies that power of the Congress and the Government will have ultimately to come to terms with the Congress. I made this clear in London and I repeat it today before you and the whole world The Congress does not belong to the Hindus alone. It stands equally for Muslims, Sikhs, Parsis, Christians, Jews and in fact all those who have made India their home. The Congress stands for those Englishmen also who have made India their home. I made the claim in London on behalf of the Congress that it stands for the whole of India and I repeat it here. Its influence is bound to increase.

Communal Solution

We would not solve the communal problem in London. I know that it could never be solved there. It can be solved by

the Congress and it is doing all that it can to solve it. The remedy is to serve all classes and communities. If the Congress serves the Sikhs and Muslims, they are sure to claim the Congress as their own.

Status of Untouchables

One word about the untouchables. I claim myself to be one of them. I have served them for my whole life. I started their service even before I took up Congress work. How can I then do anything that will harm them ? The unouchables have been so much oppressed by the caste Hindus that we can find no parallel to it in any other religion. Therefore if they get angry and do harm to ten or twenty Hindus, it should not give us cause to retaliate. I am not prepared for any concession like reservation of seats, etc., to the untouchables, because I believe that it would be perpetuating untouchability. Let the future legislatures of free India be filled with untouchables alone but let them come in as equals. Unless we raise them to our level, our freedom will be futile. So long as a person, whether man or woman, touchable or untouchable, rich or poor, is oppressed and doesnotenjoy equal rights with other citizens of the country, we cannot enjoy freedom. It will be slavery in the garb of freedom. What I did in London was only to safeguard their rights.

I had a mind to speak on many things. I had to place before you an account of what I did in London in connection with the R.T C. If I am left free, I may do it on some other occasion or you may know it through other means.

What I have to tell you now is that if there is to be a fight, be prepared for every sacrifice but take a pledge that you will not do harm to others. I will do all that lies within the power of a human being to prevent another fiery ordeal, but if I find there is no other way out, I will not hesitate to call upon you to go through it, whatever the magnitude of sufferings may be. May God give us the strength to suffer and sacrifice in the cause of freedom.

PLAN OF ACTION*

Before you discuss the resolution, let me place before you one or two things. I want you to understand two things very clearly and to consider them from the same point of view from which I am placing them before you. I ask you to consider it from my point of view, because if you approve of it, you will be enjoined to carry out all I say. It will be a great responsibility. There are people who ask me whether I am the same man that I was in 1920, or whether there has been any change in me. You are right in asking that question.

Let me, however, hasten to assure that I am the same Gandhi as I was in 1920. I have not changed in any fundamental respect. I attach the same importance to non-violence that I then did If at all, my emphasis on it has grown stronger. There is no real contradiction between the present resolution and my previous writings and utterances.

Occasions like the present do not occur in everybody's life and but rarely in anybody's life. I want you to know and feel that there is nothing but purest ahimsa in all that I am saying and doing today The draft resolution of the Working Committee is based on ahimsa ; the contemplated struggle similarly has its roots in ahimsa. If, therefore, there is any among you who has lost faith in ahimsa or is wearied of it, let him not vote for this resolution.

Let me explain my position clearly. God has vouchsafed to me a priceless gift in the weapon of ahimsa. I and my ahimsa are on our trial today. If in the present crisis, when the earth is being scorched by the flames of *himsa* and crying for deliverance, I fail to make use of the God-given talent. God will not forgive me and I shall be judged unworthy of the great gift. I must act now. I may not hesitate and merely look on, when Russia and China are threatened.

Ours is not a drive for power, but purely a non-violent fight for India's independence. In a violent struggle, a

*Speech at the A.I.C.C. meeting, Bombay, August 8, 1942.

successful general has been often known to effect a military coup and to set up a dictatorship. But under the Congress scheme of things, essentially non-violent as it is, there can be no room for dictatorship. A non-violent soldier of freedom will covet nothing for himself, he fights only for the freedom of his country. The Congress is unconcerned as to who will rule, when freedom is attained. The power, when it comes, will belong to the people of India, and it will be for them to decide to whom it should be entrusted. Maybe that the reins will be placed in the hands of the Parsis, for instance—as I would love to see happen—or they may be handed to some others whose names are not heard in the Congress today. It will not be for you then to object saying, "This community is microscopic. That party did not play its due part in the freedom's struggle ; why should it have all the power ?" Ever since its inception the Congress has kept itself meticulously free of the communal taint. It has thought always in terms of the whole nation and has acted accordingly...

I know how imperfect our ahimsa is and how far away we still are from the ideal, but in ahimsa there is no final failure or defeat. I have faith, therefore, that if, in spite of our shortcomings, the big thing does happen, it will be because God wanted to help us by crowning with success our silent, unremitting *sadhana* for the last twenty-two years.

I believe that in the history of the world, there has not been a more genuinely democratic struggle for freedom than ours. I read Carlyle's *French Revolution* while I was in prison, and Pandit Jawaharlal has told me something about the Russian revolution. But it is my conviction that inasmuch as these struggles were fought with the weapon of violence they failed to realize the democratic ideal. In the democracy which I have envisaged, a democracy established by non-violence, there will be equal freedom for all. Everybody will be his own master. It is to join a struggle for such democracy that I invite you today. Once you realize this you will forget the differences between the Hindus and Muslims, and think of yourself as Indians only engaged in the common struggle for independence.

Then, there is the question of your attitude towards the British. I have noticed that there is hatred towards the British among the people. The people say they are disgusted with their behaviour. The people make no distinction between British imperialism and the British people. To them the two are one. This hatred would even make them welcome the Japanese. It is most dangerous. It means that they will exchange one slavery for another. We must get rid of this feeling. Our quarrel is not with the British people, we fight their imperialism. The proposal for the withdrawal of British power did not come out of anger. It came to enab'e India to play its due part at the present critical juncture. It is not a happy position for a big country like India to be merely helping with money and material obtained willy-nilly from her while the United Nations are conducting the war. We cannot evoke the true spirit of sacrifice and valour so long as we do not feel that it is our war, so long as we are not free. I know the British Government will not be able to withhold freedom from us, when we have made enough self-sacrifice. We must, therefore, purge ourselves of hatred. Speaking for myself. I can say that I have never felt any hatred. As a matter of fact, I feel myself to be a greater friend of the British now than ever before. One reason is that they are today in distress. My very friendship, therefore, demands that I should try to save them from their mistakes. As I view the situation, they are on the brink of an abyss. It, therefore, becomes my duty to warn them of their danger even though it may, for the time being, anger them to the point of cutting off the friendly hand that is stretched out to help them. People may laugh, nevertheless that is my claim. At a time when I may have to launch the biggest struggle of my life, I may not harbour hatred against anybody.

FREEDOM HERE AND NOW*

I congratulate you on the resolution that you have just passed. I also congratulate the three comrades on the courage they have shown in pressing their amendments to a division,

*Speech at the A.I.C.C. meeting, Bombay, August 8, 1942.

even though they knew that there was an overwhelming majority in favour of the resolution, and I congratulate the thirteen friends who voted against the resolution. In doing so, they had nothing to be ashamed of. For the last twenty years we have tried to learn not to lose courage even when we are in a hopeless minority and are laughed at. We have learned to hold on to our beliefs in the confidence that we are in the right. It behoves us to cultivate this courage of conviction, for it ennobles man and raises his moral stature. I was, therefore, glad to see that these friends had imbibed the principle which I have tried to follow for the last fifty years and more.

Having congratulated them on their courage, let me say that what they asked this Committee to accept through their amendments was not the correct representation of the situation. These friends ought to have pondered over the appeal made to them by the Maulana to withdraw their amendments ; they should have carefully followed the explanations given by Jawaharlal. Had they done so, it would have been clear to them that the right which they now want the Congress to concede has already been conceded by the Congress.

Time was when every Mussalman claimed the whole of India as his motherland. During the years that the Ali brothers were with me, the assumption underlying all their talks and discussions was that India belonged as much to the Mussalmans as to the Hindus. I can testify to the fact that this was their innermost conviction and not a mask ; I lived with them for years. I spent days and nights in their company. And I make bold to say that their utterances were the honest expression of their beliefs. I know there are some who say that I take things too readily at their face value, that I am gullible. I do not think I am such a simpleton, nor am I so gullible as these friends take me to be. But their criticism does not hurt me. I should prefer to be considered gullible rather than deceitful.

What these Communist friends proposed through their amendments is nothing new. It has been repeated from thousands of platforms. Thousands of Mussalmans have told

that it was not a bargain on my part for saving the cow. The cow, like the Khilafat, stood on her own merits. As an honest man, a true neighbour and a faithful friend, it was incumbent on me to stand by the Mussalmans in the hour of their trial

In those days, I shocked the Hindus by dining with the Mussalmans, though with the passage of time they have got used to it. Maulana Bari told me, however, that though he would insist on having me as his guest, he would not allow me to dine with him, lest some day he should be accused of a sinister motive. And so whenever I had occasion to stay with him, he called a Brahmin cook and made special arrangements for separate cooking. Firangi Mahal, his residence, was an old-style structure with limited accommodation; yet he cheerfully bore all hardships and carried out his resolve from which I could not dislodge him. It was the spirit of courtesy, dignity and nobility that inspired us in those days. The members of each community vied with one another in accommodating members of sister communities. They respected one another's religious feelings, and considered it a privilege to do so. Not a trace of suspicion lurked in anybody's heart. Where has all that degnity, that nobility of spirt, disappeared now? I should ask all Mussalmans, including Quaid-e-Azam Jinnah, to recall those glorious days and to find out what has brought us to the present impasse. Quaid-e-Azam Jinnah himself was at one time a Congressman. If today the Congress has incurred his wrath, it is because the canker of suspicion has entered his beart. May God bless him with long life, but when I am gone, he will realize and admit that I nad no designs on Mussalmans and that I had never betrayed their interests. Where is the escape for me, if I injure their cause or betray their interests? My life is entirely at their disposal. They are free to put an end to it, whenever they wish to do so. Assaults have been made on my life in the past, but God has spared me till now, and the assailants have repented for their action. But if someone were to shoot me in the belief that he was getting rid of a rascal, he would kill not the real Gandhi, but the one that appeared to him a rascal.

To those who have been indulging in a campaign of abuse and vilification, I would say, "Islam enjoins you not to revile even an enemy. The Prophet treated even enemies with kindness and tried to win them over by his fairness and generosity ; are you followers of that Islam or of any other ? If you are followers of the true Islam, does it behove you to distrust the words of one who makes a public declaration of his faith. You may take it from me that one day you will regret the fact that you distrusted and killed one who was a true and devoted friend of yours." It cuts me to the quick to see that the more I appeal and the more the Maulana importances, the more intense does the campaign of villification grow. To me, these abuses are like bullets. They can kill me, even as a bullet can put an end to my life. You may kill me. That will not hurt me. But what of those who indulge in abusing ? They bring discredit to Islam. For the fair name of Islam, I appeal to you to resist this unceasing campaign of abuse and vilification.

Maulana Saheb is being made a target for the filthiest abuse. Why ? Because he refuses to exert on me the pressure of his friendship. He realizes that it is a misuse of friendship to seek to compel a friend to accept as truth what he knows is an untruth.

To the Quaid-e-Azam I would say : "Whatever is true and valid in the claim for Pakistan is already in your hands. What is wrong and untenable is in nobody's gift so that it can be made over to you. Even if someone were to succeed in imposing an untruth on others, he would not be able to enjoy for long the fruits of such a coercion. God dislikes pride and keeps away from it. God would not tolerate a forcible imposition of an untruth."

The Quaid-e-Azam says that he is compelled to say bitter things but that he cannot help giving expression to his thoughts and his feelings. Similarly I would say : "I consider myself a friend of Mussalmans. Why should I then not give expression to the things nearest to my heart, even at the cost of displeasing them ? How can I conceal my innermost thoughts from

them? I should congratulate the Quaid-e-Azam on his frankness in giving expression to his thoughts and feelings, even if they sound bitter to his hearers. But even so why should the Mussalmans sittings here be reviled, if they do not see eye to eye with him ? If millions of Mussalmans are with you, can you not afford to ignore the handful of Mussalmans who may appear to you to be misguided ? Why should one with the following of serveral millions be afraid of a majority community, or of the minority being swamped by the majority ? How did the Prophet work among the Arabs and the Mussalmans ? How did he propagate Islam ? Did he say he would propagate Islam only when he commanded a majority ? I appeal to you for the sake of Islam to ponder over what I say. There is neither fairplay nor justice in saying that the Congress must accept a thing even if it does not believe in it and even if it goes counter to principles it holds dear.

Rajaji said : "I do not believe in Pakistan. But Mussalmans ask for it, Mr. Jinnaah asks for it, and it has become an obsession with them. Why not then say "yes" to them just now ? The same Mr. Jinnah will later on realize the disadvantages of Pakistan and will forgo the demand." I said : "It is not fair to accept as true a thing which I hold to be untrue, and ask others to do so in the belief that the demand will not be pressed when the time comes for getting it finally. If I hold the demand to be just, I should concede it this very day. I should not agree to it merely in order to placate Jinnah Saheb. Many friends have come and asked me to agree to it. But I cannot be party to a course of action with a false promise. At any rate, it is not my method."

The Congress has no sanction but the moral one for enforcing its decisions. It believes that true democracy can only be the outcome of non-violence. The structure of a world federation can be raised only on a foundation of non-violence, and violence will have to be totally abjured from world affairs If this is true, the solution of Hindu-Muslim question, too, cannot be achieved by a resort to violence. If the Hindus tyrannize over the Mussalmans, with what face will they talk of a world

do not agree with him ? If the war goes on for six months more, how shall we be able to save China ?

I, therefore, want freedom immediately, this very night, before dawn, if it can be had Freedom cannot now wait for the realization of communal unity. If that unity is not achieved, sacrifices necessary for it will have to be much greater than would have otherwise sufficed. But the Congress must win freedom or be wiped out in the effort. And forget not that the freedom which the Congress is struggling to achieve will not be for Congressmen alone but for all the forty crores of the Indian people.

The Quaid-e-Azam has said that the Muslim League is prepared to take over the rule from the Britishers if they are prepared to hand it over to the Muslim League, for the British took over the empire from the hands of the Muslims. This, however, will be Muslim Raj. The offer made by Maulana Saheb and by me does not imply establishment of Muslim Raj or Muslim domination. The Congress does not believe in the domination of any group or any community. It believes in democracy which includes in its orbit Muslims, Hindus, Christians, Parsis, Jews—every one of the communities inhabiting this vast country. If Muslim Raj is inevitable, then let it be ; but how can we give it the stamp of our assent ? How can we agree to the domination of one community over the others ?

Millions of Mussalmans in this country come from Hindu stock. How can their homeland be any other than India ? My eldest son embraced Islam some years back. What would his homeland be—Porbandar or the Punjab ? I ask the Mussalmans ; "If India is not your homeland, what other country do you belong to ? In what separate homeland would you put my son who embraced Islam ?" His mother wrote him a letter after his conversion, asking him if he had on embracing Islam given up drinking which Islam forbids to its followers. To those who gloated over the conversion, she wrote to say : "I do not mind his becoming a Mussalman, so much as his drinking. Will you, as pious Mussalmans, tolerate

his drinking even after his conversion ? He has reduced himself to the state of a rake by drinking. If you are going to make a man of him again, his conversion will have been turned to good account. You will, therefore, please see that he as Mussalman abjures wine and woman. If that change does not come about, his conversion goes in vain and our non-co-operation with him will have to continue."

India is without doubt the homeland of all the Mussalmans inhabiting this country. Every Mussalman should therefore co-operate in the fight for India's freedom. The Congress does not belong to any one class or community ; it belongs to the whole nation. It is open to Mussalmans to take possession of the Congress. They can, if they like, swamp the Congress by their numbers, and can steer it along the course which appeals to them. The Congress is fighting not on behalf of the Hindus but on behalf of the whole nation, including the minorities. It would hurt me to hear of a single instance of a Mussalman being killed by a Congressman. In the coming revolution, Congressmen will sacrifice their lives in order to protect the Mussalman against a Hindu's attack and *vice versa*. It is a part of their creed, and is one of the essentials of non-violence. You will be expected on occasions like these not to lose your heads. Every Congressman, whether a Hindu or a Mussalman, owes this duty to the organization to which he belongs. The Mussalman who will act in this manner will render a service to Islam. Mutual trust is essential for success in the final nation-wide struggle that is to come.

I have said that much greater sacrifices will have to be made this time in the wake of our struggle because of the opposition from the Muslim League and from Englishmen. You have seen the secret circular issued by Sir Frederick Puckle. It is a suicidal course that he has taken. It contains an open incitement to organizations which crop up like mushrooms to combine to fight the Congress. We have thus to deal with an empire whose ways are crooked. Ours is a straight path which we can tread even with our eyes closed. That is the beauty of satyagraha.

In satyagraha, there is no place for fraud or falsehood, or any kind of untruth. Fraud and untruth today are stalking the world. I cannot be a helpless witness to such a situation. I have travelled all over India as perhaps nobody in the present age has. The voiceless millions of the land saw in me their friend and representative, and I identified myself with them to an extent it was possible for a human being to do. I saw trust in their eyes, which I now want to turn to good account in fighting this empire upheld on untruth and violence. However gigantic the preparations that the empire has made, we must get out of its clutches. How can I remain silent at this supreme hour and hide my light under the bushel ? Shall I ask the Japanese to carry a while ? If today I sit quiet and inactive. God will take me to task for not using up the treasure. He had given me, in the midst of the conflagration that is enveloping the whole world. Had the condition been different. I should have asked you to wait yet a while. But the situation now has become intolerable, and the Congress has no other course left for it.

Nevertheless, the actual struggle does not commence this moment. You have only placed all your powers in my hands. I will now wait upon the Viceroy and plead with him for the acceptance of the Congress demand. That process is likely to take two or three weeks. What would you do in the meanwhile ? What is the programme, for the interval, in which all can participate ? As you know, the spinning-wheel is the first thing that occurs to me. I made the same answer to the Maulana. He would have none of it, though he understood its import later. The fourteenfold constructive programme is, of course, there for you to carry out. What more should you do ? I will tell you. Everyone of you should, from this moment onwards, consider yourself a free man or woman, and act as if you are free and are no longer under the heel of this imperialism.

It is not a make-believe that I am suggesting to you. It is the very essence of freedom. The bond of the slave is snapped the moment he considers himself to be a free being. He will

plainly tell the master : "I was your bondslave till this moment, but I am a slave no longer. You may kill me if you like, but if you keep me alive, I wish to tell you that if you release me from the bondage of your own accord, I will ask nothing more from you. You used to feed and clothe me, though I could have provided food and clothing for myself by my labour. I hitherto depended on you instead of on God for food and raiment. But God has now inspired me with an urge for freedom and I am today a freeman, and will no longer depend on you."

You may take it from me that I am not going to strike a bargain with the Viceroy for ministries and the like. I am not going to be satisfied with anything short of complete freedom. May be, he will propose the abolition of salt tax, the drink evil, etc. But I will say, "Nothing less than freedom."

Here is a mantra, a short one, that I give you. You may imprint it on your hearts and let every breath of yours give expression to it. The mantra is : 'Do or die'. We shall either free India or die in the attempt ; we shall not live to see the perpetuation of our slavery. Every true Congressman or woman will join the struggle with an inflexible determination not to remain alive to see the country in bondage and slivery. Let that be your pledge. Keep jails out of your consideration. If the Government keep me free, I will spare you the trouble of filling the jails. I will not put on the Government the strain of maintaining a large number of prisoners at a time when it is in trouble. Let every man and woman live every moment of his or her life hereafter in the consciousness that he or she eats or lives for achieving freedom and will die if need be, to attain that goal. Take a pledge, with God and your own conscience as witness, that you will no longer rest till freedom is achieved and will be prepared to lay down your lives in the attempt to achieve it. He who loses his life will gain it ; he who will seek to save it shall lose it. Freedom is not for the coward or the faint-hearted.

A word to the journalists. I congratulate you on the support you have hitherto given to the national demand. I know the

restrictions and handicaps under which you have to labour. But I would now ask you to snap the chains that bind you. It should be the proud privilege of the newspapers to lead and set an example in laying down one's life for freedom. You have the pen which the Government can't suppress. I know you have large properties in the form of printing presses, etc., and you would be afraid lest the Government should attach them. I do not ask you to invite an attachment of the printing presses voluntarily. For myself, I would not suppress my pen, even if the press was to be attached. As you know, my press was attached in the past and returned later on. But I do not ask from you that final sacrifice. I suggest a middle way. You should now wind up your standing committee, and you may declare that you will give up writing under the present restrictions and take up the pen only when India has won her freedom. You may tell Sir Frederick Puckle that he can't expect from you a command performance, that his press notes are full of untruth, and that you will refuse to publish them. You will openly declare that you are whole-heartedly with the Congress. If you do this, you will have changed the atmosphere before the fight actually begins.

From the Princes I ask, with all respect due to them, for a very small thing. I am a well-wisher of the Princes. I was born in a State. My grandfather refused to salute with his right hand any Prince other than his own. But he did not say to the Prince, as I feel he ought to have said, that even his own master could not compel him, his minister, to act against his conscience. I have eaten the Prince's salt and I would not be false to it. As a faithful servant, it is my duty to warn the Princes that if they will act while I am still alive, the Princes may come to occupy an honourable place in free India. In Jawaharlal's scheme of free India, no privileges or the privileged classes have a place. Jawaharlal considers all property to be State-owned. He wants planned economy. He wants to reconstruct India according to plan. He likes to fly ; I do not. I have kept a place for the Princes and the Zamindars in India that I envisage. I would ask the Princes in all humility to enjoy through renunciation. The Princes may renounce ownership

over their properties and become their trustees in the true sense of the term. I visualize God in the assemblage of people. The Princes may say to their people : "You are the owners and masters of the State and we are your servants." I would ask the Princes to become servants of the people and render to them an account of their own services. The empire too bestows power on the Princes, but they should prefer to derive power from their own people ; and if they want to indulge in some innocent pleasures, they may seek to do so as servants of the people. I do not want the Princes to live as paupers. But I would ask them : "Do you want to remain slaves for all time ? Why should you, instead of paying homage to a foreign power, not accept the sovereignty of your own people ?" You may write to the Political Department : "The people are now awake. How are we to withstand an avalanche before which even the large empires are crumbling ? We, therefore, shall belong to the people from today onwards. We shall sink or swim with them." Believe me, there is nothing unconstitutional in the course I am suggesting. There are, so far as I know, no treaties enabling the empire to coerce the Princes. The people of the States will also declare that though they are the Princes' subjects, they are part of the Indian nation and that they will accept the leadership of the Princes, if the latter cast their lot with the people but not otherwise. If this declaration enrages the Princes and they choose to kill the people, the latter will meet death bravely and unflinchingly, but will not go back on their word.

Nothing, however, should be done secretly. This is an open rebellion. In this struggle secrecy is a sin. A free man would not engage in a secret movement. It is likely that when you gain freedom you will have a C.I.D. of your own, in spite of my advice to the contrary. But in the present struggle, we have to work openly and to receive bullets on our chest, without taking to our heels.

I have a word to say to Government servants also. They may not, if they like, resign their posts yet. The late Justice Ranade did not resign his post, but he openly declared that he

belonged to the Congress. He said to the Government that though he was a judge, he was a Congressman and would openly attend the sessions of the Congress, but that at the same time he would not let his political views warp his impartiality on the bench. He held the Social Reform Conference in the very *pandal* of the Congress. I would ask all the Government servants to follow in the footsteps of Ranade and to declare their allegiance to the Congress as an answer to the secret circular issued by Sir Frederick Puckle.

This is all that I ask of you just now. I will now write to the Viceroy. You will be able to read the correspondence not just now but when I publish it with the Viceroy's consent. But you are free to aver that you support the demand to be put forth in my letter. A judge came to me and said : "We get secret circulars from high quarters. What are we to do ?" I replied, "If I were in your place, I would ignore the circulars. You may openly say to the Government : 'I have received your secret circular. I am, however, with the Congress. Though I serve the Government for my livelihood. I am not going to obey these secret circulars or to employ underhand methods."

Soldiers too are covered by the present programme. I do not ask them just now to resign their posts and to leave the army. The soldiers come to me, Jawaharlal and the Maulana and say ; "We are wholly with you. We are tired of the Government tyranny." To the soldiers I would say : "You may say to the Government : 'Our hearts are with the Congress. We are not going to leave our posts. We will serve you so long as we receive your salaries. We will obey your just orders, but will refuse to fire on our own people."

To those who lack the courage to do this much, I have nothing to say. They will go their own way. But if you can do this much, you may take it from me that the whole atmosphere will be electrified. Let the Government then shower bombs, if they like. But no power on earth will then be able to keep you in bondage any longer.

If the students want to join the struggle only to go back to their studies after a while, I would not invite them to it. For

the present, however, till the time that Iframe a programme for the struggle, I would ask the students to say to their professors: "We belong to the Congress. Do you belong to the Congress, or to the Government? If you belong to the Congress you need not vacate your posts. You will remain at your post but teach us and lead us unto freedom." In all fights for freedom, the word over, the students have made very large contributions.

If in the interval that is left to us before the actual fight begins, you do even the little I have suggested to you, you will have changed the atmosphere and will have prepared the ground for the next step.

There is much I should yet like to say. But my heart is heavy. I have already taken up much of your time. I have yet to say a few words in English also. I thank you for the patience and attention with which you have listened to me even at this late hour. It is just what true soldiers would do. For the last twenty-two years, I have controlled my speech and pen and have stored up my energy. He is a true *brahmachari* who does not fritter away his energy. He will, therefore, always control his speech. That has been my conscious effort all these years. But today the occasion has come when I had to unburden my heart before you I have done so, even though it meant putting a strain on your pat ence ; and I do not regret having done it. I have given you my message and through you I have delivered it to the whole of India.

DO OR DIE*

I have taken such an inordinately long time over pouring out what was agitating my soul to those whom I had just now the privilege of serving. I have been called their leader or, in military language, their commander. But I do not look at my position in that light. I have do weapon but love to wield my authority over anyone. I do sport a stick which you can break into bits without the slightest exertion. It is simply my

*Speech at the A.I.C.C. meeting, Bombay, August 8, 1942.

staff with the help of which I walk. Such a cripple is not elated when he is called upon to bear the greatest burden. You can share that burden only when I appear before you not as your commander but as a humble servant. And he who serves best is the chief among equals.

Therefore, I was found to share with you such thoughts as were welling up in my breast and tell you, in as summary a manner as I can, what I expect you to do as the first step.

Let me tell you at the outset that the real struggle does not commence today. I have yet to go through much ceremonial as always do. The burden, I confess, would be almost unbearable. I have to continue to reason in those circles with whom I have lost my credit and who have no trust left in me. I know that in the course of the last few weeks I have forfeited my credit with a large number of friends, so much so, that they have begun to doubt not only my wisdom but even my honesty. Now I hold my wisdom is not such a treasure which I cannot afford to lose ; but my honesty is a precious treasure to me and I can ill-afford to lose it. I seem however to have lost it for the time being.

Friend of the Empire

Such occasions arise in the life of the man who is a pure seeker after truth and who would seek to serve humanity and his country to the best of his lights without fear or hypocrisy. For the last fifty years I have known no other way. I have been a humble servant of humanity rendered on more than one have been occasion such service as I could to the Empire, and here let me say without fear of challenge that throughout my career never have I asked for any personal favour. I have enjoyed the privilege of friendship as I enjoy it today with Lord Linlithgow. It is a friendship which has outgrown official relationship. Whether Lord Linlithgow will bear me out, I do not know, but there is a personal bond between him and myself. He once introduced me to his daughter. His son-in-law, the A.D.C., was drawn towards me. He fell in love with Mahadev more than with me and Lady Anna and he came to

me. She is an obedient and favourite daughter. I take interest in their welfare. I take the liberty to give out these personal and sacred titbits only to give you an earnest of the personal bond which exists between us; and yet let me declare here that the personal bond will never interfere with the stubborn struggle on which, if it falls to my lot, I may have to launch against Lord Linlithgow, as the representative of the Empire. I will have to resist the might of that Empire with the might of the dumb millions with no limit but of non-violence as policy confined to this struggle. It is a terrible job to have to offer resistance to a Viceroy with whom I enjoy such relations. He has more than once trusted my word, often about my people. I would love to repeat that experiment, as it stands to his credit. I mention this with great pride and pleasure. I mention it as an earnest of my desire to be true to the Empire when that Empire forfeited my trust and the Englishman who was its Viceroy came to know it.

Charlie Andrews

Then there is the sacred memory of Charlie Andrews which wells up within me. At this moment the spirit of Anorews hovers about me For me he sums up the brightest traditions of English culture. I enjoyed closer relations with him than with most Indians. I enjoyed his confidence. There were no secrets between us. We exchanged our hearts every day. Whatever was in his heart he would blurt out without the slightest hesitation or reservation. It is true he was a friend of Gurudev but he looked upon Gurudev with awe. He had that peculiar humility. But with me he became the closest friend. Years ago he came to me with a note of introduction from Gokhale. Pearson and he were the first rank specimens of Englishmen. I know that his spirit is listening to me.

Then I have got a warm letter of congratulations from the Metropolitan of Calcutta. I hold him to be a man of God. Today he is opposed to me.

Voice of Conscience

With all this background, I want to declare to the world, although I may have forfeited the regard of many friends in the

West, and I must bow my head low ; but even for their friendship or love I must not suppress the voice of conscience—the promptings of my inner basic nature today. There is something within me impelling me to cry out my agony. I have known humanity. I have studied something of psychology. Such a man knows exactly what it is. I do not mind how you describe it. That voice within calls to me : "You have to stand against the whole world although you may have to stand alone. You have to stare in the face of the whole world although the world may look at you with bloodshot eyes Do not fear. Trust the little voice residing within your heart." It says : "Forsake friends, wife and all ; but testify to that for which you have lived and for which you have to die." Believe me, friends I am not anxious to die. I want to live my full span of life. And for me I put my span of life at 120 years. By that time India will be free, the world will be free.

Let me tell you too that I do not regard England or for that matter America as free countries. They are free after their own fashion, free to hold in bondage coloured races of the earth. Are England and America fighting for the liberty of these races today ? If not, do not ask me to wait until after the war. You shall not limit my concept of freedom. The English and American teachers, their history, their magnificent poetry have not said that you shall not broaden the interpretation of freedom. And according to my interpretation of that freedom I am constrained to say that they are strangers to that freedom which their teachers and poets have described. If they will know the real freedom they should come to India. They have to come not with pride or arrogance but in the spirit of real earnest seekers of truth. It is a fundamental truth which India has been experimenting with for 22 years.

Congress and Non-violence

Unconsciously from its very foundations long ago, the Congress has been building on non-violence known as constitutional methods. Dadabhai and Pherozeshah who had held

Congress and India in the palms of their hands became rebels. They were lovers of the Congress. They were its masters. But above all they were real servants. They never countenanced murder, secrecy and the like. I confess there are many black sheep amongst us Congressmen. But I trust the whole of India today to lunch upon a non-violent struggle. I trust because of my nature to rely upon the innate goodness of human nature which perceives the truth and prevails during the cris's as if by instinct. But even if I am deceived in this I shall not swerve. I shall not flinch. From its very inception, the Congress based its policy on peaceful methods, included swaraj and the subsequent generations added non-violence. When Dadabhai entered the British Parliament, Salisbury dubbed him as a black man ; but the English people defeated Salisbury and Dadabhai went to the Parliament by their vote. India was delirious with joy. These things however India has outgrown.

I Will Go Ahead

It is, however, with all these things as the background that I want Englishmen, Europeans and all the United Nations to examine in their hearts what crime had India committed in demanding Independence. I ask, is it right for you to distrust such an organization with all its background, tradition and record of over half a century and misrepresent its endeavours before all the world by every means at your command ? It is right that by hook or by crook, aided by the foreign press, aided by the President of the U.S.A., or even by the Generalissimo of China who has yet to win his laurels, you should present India's struggle in shocking caricature ? I have met the Generalissimo. I have known him through Madame Shek who was my interpretor : and though he seemed inscrutable to me, not so Madame Shek ; and he allowed me to read his mind through her. There is a chorus of disapproval and righteous protest all over the world against us. They say we are erring, the move is inopportune. I had great regard for British diplomacy which has enabled them to hold the Empire so long. Now it stinks in my nostrils, and others have studied that

diplomacy and are putting it into practice. They may succeed in getting, through these methods, world opinion on their side for a time; but India will speak against that world opinion. She will raise her voice against it. Even if all the United Nations opposed me, even if the whole of India forsakes me, I will say, "You are wrong. India will wrench with non-violence her liberty from unwilling hands." I will go ahead not for India's sake alone, but for the sake of the world. Even if my eyes close before there is freedom, non-violence will not end. They will be dealing a mortal blow to China and to Russia if they oppose the freedom of non-violent India which is pleading with bended knees for the fulfilment of a debt long overdue. Does a creditor ever go to the debtor like that ? And even when India is met with such angry opposition, she says, "We won't hit below the belt, we have learnt sufficient gentlemanliness. We are pledged to non-violence." I have been the author of non-embarrassment policy of the Congress and yet today you find me talking this strong language. I say it is consistent with our honour. If a man holds me by the neck and wants to drown me, may I not struggle to free myself directly ? There is no inconsistency in our position today.

Appeal to United Nations

There are representatives of the foreign press assembled here today. Through them I wish to say to the world that the United Powers who somehow or other say that they have need for India, have the opportunity now to declare India free and prove their *bona fides*. If they miss it, they will be missing the opportunity of their lifetime, and history will record that they did not discharge their obligations to India in time, and lost the battle. I want the blessing of the whole world so that I may succeed with them. I do not want the United Powers to go beyond their obvious limitations. I do not want them to accept non-violence and disarm today. There is a fundamental difference between fascism and this imperialism which I am fighting. Do they get from India all they want ? What they get today is from India which they hold in bondage. Think what difference it would make if India was to participate as a free ally. That freedom, if it is to come

must come today. It will have no taste left in it if today you who have the power to help cannot exercise it. If you can exercise it, under the glow of freedom, what seems impossible today will become possible tomorrow. If India feels that freedom, she will command that freedom for China. The road for running to Russia's help will be open. The Englishmen did not die in Malaya or on Burma soil. What shall enable us to receive the situation ? Where shall I go, and where shall I take the forty crores of India ? How is this vast mass of humanity to be aglow in the cause of world deliverance, unless and until it has touched and felt freedom ? Today they have not a touch of life left. It has been crushed out of them. Its lustre is to be put into their eyes, freedom has to come not tomorrow, but today.

I have pledged the Congress and the Congress will do or die.

ON CABINET MISSION'S PROPOSAL*

I have often said that man plans but the success of his plans depends not on him but on the will of Providence which is the supreme arbiter of our destinies. Unlike you, I am not in my own right but on sufferance. I have been told that some of my previous remarks about the Cabinet Mission's proposals have caused a good deal of confusion in the public mind. As a satyagrahi it is always my endeavour to speak the whole truth and nothing but the truth. I never have a wish to hide anything from you. I have mental reservations. But language is at best an imperfect medium of expression. No man can fully express in words what he feels or thinks. Even seers and prophets of old have suffered under that disability.

No Inconsistency

I have not seen what has appeared in the papers about what I am supposed to have said regarding the Cabinet

*Speech at the A.I.C.C. meeting, Bombay, July 7, 1946.

Mission's proposals. I cannot read all the newspapers myself. I content myself with perusing only what my co-workers and assistants may place before me. I hold that I have lost nothing thereby. Because of what has appeared in the Press, an impression seems to have been created that I said one thing at Delhi and am saying something different now. I did say in one of my speeches at Delhi in regard to the Cabinet Mission's proposals that I saw darkness where I saw light before. That darkness has not yet lifted. If possible it has deepened. I could have asked the Working Committee to turn down the proposal about the Constituent Assembly if I could see my way clearly. You know my relations with the members of the Working Committee. Babu Rajendra Prasad might have been a High Court Judge, but he chose instead to act as my interpreter and clerk in Champaran. Then there is the Sardar. He has earned the nickname of being my yes-man. He does not mind. He even flaunts it as a compliment. He is a stormy petrel. Once he used to dress and dine in the Western style. But ever since he decided to cast his lot with me, my word has been law to him. But even he cannot see eye to eye with me in his matter. They both tell me that whereas on all previous occasions I was able to support my instinct with reason and satisfy their head as well as heart, this time I have failed to do so. I told them in reply that whilst my own heart was filled with misgivings, I could not adduce any reason for it, or else I would have asked them to reject the proposals straightway. It was my duty to place my misgivings before them to put them on their guard. But they should examine what I had said in the cold light of reason and accept my viewpoint only if they were convinced of its correctness. Their decision, which they have arrived at after prolonged deliberations and which is almost unanimous, is before you. The members of the Working Committee are your faithful and tried servants. You should not lightly reject their resolution.

Defeatist Logic

I am willing to admit that the proposed Constituent Assembly is not the Parliament of the people. It has many

defects. But you are all seasoned and veteran fighters. A soldier is never afraid of danger. He revels in it. If there are shortcomings in the proposed Constituent Assembly, it is for you to get them removed. It should be a challenge to combat, not a ground for rejection. I am surprised that Shree Jayaprakash Narayan said yesterday that it would be dangerous to participate in the proposed Constituent Assembly and therefore they should reject the Working Committee's resolution. I was not prepared to hear such defeatist language from the lips of a tried fighter like Jayaprakash. One line from a song composed by the late Choudhary Rambhaj Dutt has always made a very deep appeal to me. It means: 'We will never be defeated—nay, not even in death.' That is the spirit in which I expect you to approach this resolution A satyagrahi knows no defeat.

Nor would I expect a satyagrahi to say that whatever Englishmen do must be bad. The English are not necessarily bad. There are good men and bad men among the English people as among any other people. We ourselves are not free from defects. The English could not have risen to their present strength if they had not some good in them. They have come and exploited India, because we quarrelled amongst ourselves and allowed ourselves to be exploited. In God's world unmixed evil never prospers. God rules even where Satan seems to hold sway, because the latter exists only on His sufferance. Some people say that satyagraha is of no avail against a person who has no moral sense. I join issue with that. The stoniest heart must melt if we are true and have enough patience. A satyagrahi lays down his life, but never gives up. That is the meaning of the 'Do or Die' slogan. That slogan does not mean 'Kill or be killed'. That would be wilful distortion and a travesty of its true meaning The true meaning is that we must do our duty and die in the course of performing it, if necessary. To die without killing is the badge of a satyagrahi. If we had lived up to that ideal we would have won swaraj by now. But our ahimsa was lame. It walked on crutches. Even so it has brought us to our present strength. I know what happened in 1942. You will

perhaps say that it was sabotage and underground activity that had brought the country to its present strength. It cannot be denied that sabotage activity was carried on in the name of the Congress during the 1942 struggle but I deny in toto that the strength of the masses is due to that. Whatever strength the masses have is due entirely to ahimsa—however imperfect or defective its practice might have been. Our ahimsa was imperfect because we were imperfect, because it was presented to you by an imperfect being like myself. If then, even in the hands of imperfect instruments it could produce such brilliant results, what could it not achieve in the hands of a perfect satyagrahi ?

In 1942 our people showed great valour. But greater valour will be required of us before our goal is reached. We have done much, but more remains to be done. For that we must have patience and humility and detachment. You should try to understand what happened in 1942, the inner meaning of that struggle and the reason why it stopped short where it did.

No Bed of Roses

This is no time for dalliance or ease. I told Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru that he must wear the crown of thorns for the sake of the nation and he has agreed. The Constituent Assembly is going to be no bed of roses for you but only a bed of thorns. You may not shirk it.

That does not mean that everybody should want to go into it. Only those should go there who are specially fitted for the task by virtue of their legal training or special talent. It is not a prize to be sought as a reward for sacrifices, but a duty to be faced even like mounting the gallows or sacrifice of one's all at the altar of service.

There is another reason why you should join the Constituent Assembly. If you asked me whether in the event of your rejecting the proposed Constituent Assembly or the Constituent Assembly failing to materialize, I would

advise the people to launch civil disobedience, individual or mass, or undertake a fast myself, my reply is 'NO'. I believe in walking alone. I came alone in this world, I have walked alone when the time came. I know I am quite capable of launching satyagraha even if I am all alone. I have done so before. But this is no occasion for a fast or civil disobedience. I regard the Constituent Assembly as the substitute of satyagraha. It is constructive satyagraha.

Duty of a Satyagrahi

The alternative is constructive work which you have never done justice to. If you had, you would have today got the Constituent Assembly of Jayaprakash's dream instead of the present one. But a satyagrahi cannot wait or delay action till perfect conditions are forthcoming. He will act with whatever material is at hand, purge it of dross and convert it into pure gold. Whatever may be the defects in the State Document of May 16th. I have no doubt as to the honesty of those who have framed it. They know they have got to quit. They want to quit in an orderly manner. And to that end they have produced the Document they could under the circumstances. I refuse to believe that they came all the way from England to deceive us.

A Polish lady has sent me a note just today saying that all Europeans had received secret instructions to leave India as the British army would no longer be able to give them adequate protection. If it is so, it is a sad reflection on us. We would be unworthy of the name of satyagrahi if even an English child did not feel secure in our midst. Even if we succeed in driving out the Europeans by these tactics, something worse will take their place. Our "Quit India" resolution has no malice about it. It only means that we will no longer be exploited.

Let us not be cowardly, but approach our task with confidence and courage. Let not the fear of being deceived dismay us. No one can deceive a satyagrahi. Never mind the darkness that fills my mind. He will turn it into light.

INDIA AND PAKISTAN*

It is our misfortune that the country was divided into two parts. The division was avowedly by reason of religious cleavage. Behind it might be economic and other causes. They could not have brought out the cleavage. The poison that fills the air arose also from the same communal cause. Irreligion masquerades as religion. It sounds nice to say that it would have been better if there had been no communal question. But how could the fact be undone ?

It has been repeatedly asked whether in the event of a war between the two, the Muslims of the Union will fight against the Muslims of Pakistan and the Hindus of one against those of the other. However unlikely it may appear at present, there is nothing inherently impossible in the conception. There is any way more risk in distrusting the profession of loyalty than in trusting it and courageously facing the danger of trusting. The question can be more convincingly put in this way : Will the Hindus ever fight the Hindus and the Muslims their co religionists for the sake of truth and justice ? It can be answered by a counter question : Does not history provide such instances ?

In solving the puzzle the great stumbling block in the way is that truth is at discount. Let us hope that in this holocaust there are some who will stand firm in their faith in the victory of truth.

*From *Harijan*, 26 October, 1947.

alism by synthesising it with positive liberalism, democratic socialism, dynamic secularism, genuine internationalism and integral humanism. Hume is regarded as the 'Father of the Indian National Congress' and Gandhiji as the 'Father of the Indian Nation', Jawaharlal Nehru deserves to be called 'the great builder of modern India.']

HOW BRITAIN RULED INDIA*

December 5, 1932

I have already written you three long letters on India in the nineteenth century. It is a long story and a long agony, and if I compress it too much, I fear that I shall make it still more difficult to understand. I am perhaps paying more attention to this period of India's story than I have paid to other countries or other periods. That is not unnatural. Being an Indian, I am more interested in it, and knowing more about it, I can write more fully. Besides, this period has something much more than a historical interest for us. Modern India, such as we find her today, was formed and took shape in this travail of the nineteenth century. If we are to understand India as she is, we must know something of the forces that went to make her or mar her. Only so can we serve her intelligently, and know what we should do and what path we should take.

I have not done with this period of India's history. I have still much to tell you. In these letters I take one or more aspect and tell you something about it. I deal with each aspect separately, so that it may be easier to understand. But you will know, of course, that all these activities and changes that I have told you about, and all those that I shall describe in this letter and afterwards, took place more or less simultaneously, one influencing the other, and between them they produced the India of the nineteenth century.

Reading of these deeds and misdeeds of the British in India, you will sometimes feel angry at the policy they have pursued and the widespread misery that has resulted from it.

*From Nehru's *Glimpses of World History*, Chapter 112.

But whose fault was it that this happened ? Was it not due to our own weakness and ignorance ? Weakness and folly are always invitations to despotism If the British can profit by our mutual dissensions, the fault is ours that we quarrel amongst ourselves. If they can divide us and so weaken us, playing on the selfishness of separate groups, our permitting this is itself a sign of the superiority of the British. Therefore if you would be angry, be angry with weakness and ignorance and mutual strife, for it is these things that are responsible for our troubles.

The tyranny of the British, we say. Whose tyranny is it, after all ? Who profits by it ? Not the whole British race, for millions of them are themselves unhappy and oppressed. And undoubtedly there are small groups and classes of Indians who have profited a little by the British exploitation of India. Where are we to draw the line, then ? It is not a question of individuals, but that of a system. We have been living under a huge machine that has exploited and crushed India's millions. This machine is the machine of the new imperialism, the outcome of industrial capitalism. The profits of this exploitation go largely to England, but in England they go almost entirely to certain classes. Some part of the profits of exploitation remain in India also, and certain classes benefit by them. It is therefore foolish for us to get angry with individuals, or even with the British as a whole. If a system is wrong and injures us, it has to be changed. It makes little difference who runs it, and even good people are helpless in a bad system. With the best will in the world, you cannot convert stones and earth into good food, however much you may cook them. So it is, I think, with imperialism and capitalism. They cannot be improved ; the only real improvement is to do away with them altogether. But that is my opinion. Some people differ from this. You need not take anything for granted, and, when the time comes, you can draw your own conclusions. But about one thing most people do agree : that what is wrong is the system, and it is useless getting annoyed with individuals. If we want a change, let us attack and change the system. We have seen some of the evil effects of the system in India. When we consider China and Egypt and

many other countries we shall see the same system, the same machine of capitalist-imperialism, at work exploiting other peoples.

We shall go back to our story. I have told you of the advanced stage of Indian cottage-industries when the British came. With natural progress in the methods of production, and without any intervention from outside, it is probable that some time or other machine-industry would have come to India. There was iron and coal in the country and and, as we saw in England, these helped the new industrialism greatly, and indeed partly brought it about. Ultimately this would have happened in India also. There might have been some delay in this, owing to the chaotic political conditions. The British, however, intervened. They represented a country and a community which had already changed over to the new big machine production. One might think, therefore, that they would favour such a change in India also, and encourage that class in India which was most likely to bring it about. They did no such thing. Indeed, they did the very opposite of this. Treating India as a possible rival, they broke up her industries, and actually discouraged the growth of machine-industry.

Thus we find a somewhat remarkable state of affairs in India. We find that the British, the most advanced people in Europe at the time, ally themselves in India with the most backward and conservative classes. They bolster up a dying feudal class; they create landlords; they support the hundreds of dependent Indian rulers in their semi-feudal states. They actually strengthen feudalism in India Yet these British had been the pioneers in Europe of the middle-class or *bourgeois* revolution which had given their Parliament power; they had also been the pioneers in the Industrial Revolution which had resulted in introducing industrial capitalism to the world. It was because of their lead in these matters that they went far ahead of their rivals and established a vast empire.

It is not difficult to understand why the British acted in this way in India. The whole basis of capitalism is cut-throat competition and exploitation, and imperialism is an advanced

stage of this. So the British, having the power, killed their actual rivals and deliberately prevented the growth of other rivals. They could not possibly make friends with the masses, for the whole object of their presence in India was to exploit them. The interests of the exploiters and the exploited could never be the same. So they, the British, fell back on the relics of feudalism which India still possessed. These had little real strength left even when the British came, but they were propped up and given a small share in the exploitation of the country. This propping up could only give temporary relief to a class which had outlived its utility; when the props were removed they were sure to fall or adapt themselves to the new conditions. There were as many as 700 Indian States, big and small, depending on the good-will of the British. You know some of these big States : Hyderabad, Kashmir, Mysore, Baroda, Gwalior, etc. But, curiously, most of the Indian rulers of these States are not descended from the old feudal nobility, just as most of the big *zamindars* have no very ancient traditions. There is one chief, however—the Maharana of Udaipur, the head of the Surya Vanshi, Rajputs of the race of the Sun, who can trace his lineage back to dim prehistoric days. Probably the only living person who can compete with him in this respect is the Mikado of Japan.

British rule also helped religious conservatism. This sounds strange, for the British claimed to profess Christiaity, and yet their coming made Hinduism and Islam in India more rigid. To some extent this reaction was natural, as foreign invasion tends to make the religions and culture of the country protect themselves by rigidity. It was in this way that Hinduism had become rigid and caste had developed after the Muslim invasions. Now, both Hinduism and Islam reacted after this fashion. But, apart from this, the British Government in India actually—both deliberately and unconsciously—helped the conservative elements in the two religions. The British were not interested in religion or in conversions; they were out to make money. They were afraid of interfering in any way in religious matters lest the people, in their anger, rose against them. So to avoid even the suspicion of interference, they went so far as actually to protect and help the country's reli-

gions, or rather the external forms of religion. The result often was that the outer form remained, but there was little inside it.

This fear of irritating the orthodox people made the government side with them in matters of reform. Thus the cause of reform was held up. An alien government can seldom introduce social reform, because every change it seeks to introduce is resented by the people. Hinduism and Hindu law were in many respects changing and progressive, though the progress had been remarkably slow in recent centuries. Hindu law itself is largely custom, and customs change and grow. This elasticity of the Hindu law disappeared under the British and gave place to rigid legal codes drawn up after consultation with the most orthodox people. Thus the growth of Hindu society, slow as it was, was stopped. The Muslims resented the new conditions even more, and retired into their shells.

A great deal of credit is taken by the British for the abolition of what is (rather incorrectly) called *sati*, the practice of a Hindu widow burning herself on the funeral pyre of her husband. They deserve some credit for this, but as a matter of fact the government only took action after many years of agitation by Indian reformers headed by Raja Ram Mohan Roy. Previous to them other rulers, and especially the Marathas, had forbidden it ; the Portuguese Albuquerque had abolished the practice in Goa. It was put down by the British as a result of Indian agitation and Christian missionary endeavours. So far as I can remember, this was the only reform of religious significance which was brought about by the British Government.

So the British allied themselves with all the backward and conservative elements in the country. And they tried to make India a purely agricultural country producing raw materials for their industries. To prevent factories growing up in India they actually put a duty on machinery entering India. Other countries encouraged their own industries. Japan, as we shall see, simply galloped ahead with industrialization. But in India

the British Government put its foot down. Owing to the duty on machinery, which was not taken off till 1860, the cost of building a factory in India was four times that of building it in England, although labour was far cheaper in India. This policy of obstruction could only delay matters; it could not stop the inevitable march of events. About the middle of the century machine-industry began to grow in India. The jute industry began in Bengal with British capital. The coming of the railways helped the growth of industry, and after 1880 cotton mills, largely with Indian capital, grew up in Bombay and Ahmedabad. Then came mining. Except for the cotton mills, this slow industrialization was very largely done with British capital. And all this was almost in spite of the government. The government talked of the *laissez faire* policy, of allowing matters to take their own course, of not interfering with private initiative. The British Government had interfered with Indian trade in England and curshed it with duties and prohibitions when this was a rival in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Having got on top, they could afford to talk of *laissez faire*. As a matter of fact, however, they were not merely indifferent. They actually discouraged certain Indian industries, especially the growing cotton industry of Bombay and Ahmedabad. A tax or duty was put on the products of these Indian mills; it was called the excise duty on cotton. The object of this was to help British cotton goods from Lancashire to compete with Indian textiles. Almost every country puts duties on some foreign goods, either to protect its own industries or to raise money. But the British in India did a very unusual and remarkable thing. They put the duty on Indian goods themselves! This cotton excise duty was continued, in spite of a great deal of agitation, till recent years.

In this way modern industry grew slowly in India, despite the government. The richer classes in India cried out more and more for industrial development. It was only as late, I think, as 1905 that the government created a department of Commerce and Industry, but even so little was done by it till the World War came. This growth of industrial conditions created a

class of industrial workers who worked in the city factories. The pressure on land, of which I have told you, and the semi-famine conditions of the rural areas, drove many villagers to these factories, as well as to the great plantations that were rising in Bengal and Assam. This pressure also led many to emigrate to other countries where they were told they would get high wages. Emigration took place especially to South Africa, Fiji, Mauritius and Ceylon. But the change did little good to the workers. The emigrants in some of the countries were treated almost like slaves. In the tea-plantations of Assam they were in no better condition. Discouraged and disheartened, many of them sought, later on, to return to their villages from the plantations. But they were not welcome in their own villages, as there was no land to be had.

The workers in the factories soon found that the slightly higher wage did not go very far. Everything cost more in the cities; altogether the cost of living was much higher. The places where they had to live were wretched hovels, filthy, damp and dark and insanitary. Their working conditions were also bad. In the village they had often starved, but they had their fill of the sun and of fresh air. There was no fresh air and little sun for the factory-worker. His wages were not enough to meet the higher cost of living Even women and children had to work long hours. Mothers with babes in their arms took to drugging their babies so that they might not interfere with work. Such were the miserable conditions under which these industrial workers worked in the factories. They were unhappy, of course, and discontent grew. Sometimes, in very despair, they had a strike—t at is, they stopped work. But they were weak and feeble, and could easily be crushed by their wealthy employers, backed often by the government. Very slowly and after bitter experience they learnt the value of joint action. They formed trade unions.

Do not think that this is a description of past conditions. There has been some improvement in labour conditions in India. Certain laws have been passed giving just a little protection to the poor worker. But even now you have but to

go to Cawnpore or Bombay, or a number of other places where factories exist, and you will be horrified to see the houses of the workers.

I have written to you in this and other letters of the British in India and of the British Government in India. What was this like, and how did it function ? There was the East India Company at first, but behind it was the British Parliament. In 1858, after the great Revolt, the British Parliament took direct charge, and later the English King, or rather Queen, for there was a queen then, became Kaiser-i-Hind In India there was the Governor-General, who became a Viceroy also, at the top, and under him were crowds of officials. India was divided up, more or less as it is now, into large provinces and States. The States under Indian rulers were supposed to be half-independent, but as a matter of fact they were wholly depdenent on the British. An English official, called the Resident, lived in each of the larger States, and he exercised general control over the administration. He was not interested in internal reform, and it mattered little to him how bad or old-fashioned the government of the State was. What he was interested in was in strengthening British authority in the State.

About a third of India was divided up into these States. The remaining two-thirds were under the direct government of the British. These two-thirds were therefore called British India. All the high officials in British India were British, except towards the end of the century, when a few Indians crept in. Even so all power and authority of course remained, and still remains, with the British. These high officials, apart from the military, were members of what is called the Indian Civil Service. The whole government of India was thus controlled by this service, the I.C.S. Such a government by officials, who appoint each other and are not responsible for what they do to the people, is called a bureaucracy, from the word bureau, an office.

We hear a great deal about this I.C.S. They have been a curious set of persons. They were efficient in some ways. They organized the government, strengthened British rule, and

incidentally, profited greatly by it themselves. All the departments of government which helped in consolidating British rule and in collecting taxes were efficiently organized. Other departments were neglected. Not being appointed by, or responsible to, the people, the I.C.S. paid little attention to these other departments which concerned the people most. As was natural under the circumstances, they became arrogant and overbearing and contemptuous of public opinion. Narrow and limited in outlook, they began to look upon themselves as the wisest people on earth. The good of India meant to them primarily the good of their own service. They formed a kind of mutual admiration society and were continually praising each other. Unchecked power and authority inevitably lead to this, and the Indian Civil Service were practically masters of India. The British Parliament was too far away to interfere and, in any event, it had no occasion to interfere, as they served its interests and the interests of British industry. As for the interests of the people of India, there was no way of influencing them to any marked extent. Even feeble criticism of their actions was resented by them, so intolerant were they.

And yet the Indian Civil Service has had many good and honest and capable people in it. But they could not change the drift of policy or divert which was dragging India along. The I.C.S. were, after all, the agents of the industrial and financial interests in England, who were chiefly interested in exploiting India.

This bureaucratic government of India grew efficient wherever its own interests and the interests of British industry were concerned. But education and sanitation and hospitals and the many other activities which go to make a healthy and progressive nation were neglected. For many years there was no thought of these. The old village schools died away. Then slowly and grudgingly a little start was made. This start in education was also brought about by their own needs. The British people filled all the high offices, but obviously they could not fill the smaller offices and the clerkships. Clerks were wanted, and it was to produce clerks that schools and colleges

were first started by the British Ever since then this has been the main purpose of education in India ; and most of its products are only capable of being clerks. But soon the supply of clerks was greater than the demand in government and other offices. Many were left over, and these formed a new class of educated unemployed.

Bengal took the lead in this new English education, and therefore the early supply of clerks was very largely Bengali. In 1837 three universities were started – in Calcutta, Bombay, and Madras. A fact worth noticing is that the Muslims did not take kindly to the new education. They were thus left behind in the race for clerkships and government service. Later this became one of their grievances.

Another fact worth noticing is that even when the government made a start with education, girls were completely ignored. This is not surprising. The education given was meant to produce clerks, and men-clerks were wanted, and only they were available then, owing to backward social customs. So girls were wholly neglected, and it was long afterwards when some little beginning was made for them.

THE REAWAKENING OF INDIA*

December, 7, 1932

I have told you of the consolidation of British rule in India and of the policy which brought poverty and misery to our people. Peace certainly came, and orderly government also, and both were welcome after the disorders which followed the break-up of the Moghal empire. Organized gangs of thieves and dacoits had been put down. But peace and order were worth little to the man in the field or the factory, who was crushed under the grinding weight of the new domination. But again, I would remind you, it is foolish to get angry with a country or with a people, with Britain or the British. They were as much the victims of circumstances as we were. Our

*From Nehru's *Glimpses of World History*, Chapter 113.

study of history has shown us that life is often very cruel and callous. To get excited over, it, or merely to blame people, is foolish and does not help. It is much more sensible to try to understand the causes of poverty and misery and exploitation, and then try to remove them. If we fail to do so, and fall back in the march of events, we are bound to suffer. India fell back in this way. She became a bit of a fossil ; her society was crystallized in old tradition ; her social system lost its energy and life and began to stagnate. It is not surprising that India suffered. The British happened to be the agents to make her suffer. If they had not been there, perhaps some other people might have acted in the same way.

But one great benefit the English did confer on India. The very impact of their new and vigorous life shook up India and brought about a feeling of political unity and nationality. Perhaps such a shock, painful as it was, was needed to rejuvenate our ancient country and people English education, intended to produce clerks, also put Indians in touch with current western thought. A new class began to arise, the English-educated class, small in numbers and cut off from the masses, but still destined to take the lead in the new nationalist movements. This class, at first, was full of admiration for England and the English ideas of liberty. Just then people in England were talking a great deal about liberty and democracy. All this was rather vague, and in India England was ruling despotically for her own benefit. But it was hoped, rather optimistically, that England would confer freedom on India at the right time.

The impact of western ideas on India had its effect on Hindu religion also to some extent. The masses were not affected and, as I have told you, the British Government's policy actually helped the orthodox people. But the new middle class that was arising, consisting of government servants and professional people, were affected. Early in the nineteenth century an attempt to reform Hinduism on western lines took place in Bengal. Of course Hinduism had innumerable reformers in the past, and some of these I have mentioned to you in the course of these letters, But the new attempt was definitely

influenced by Christianity and western thought. The maker of this attempt was Raja Ram Mohan Roy, a great man and a great scholar, whose name we have come across already in connection with the abolition of *sati*. He knew Sanskrit and Arabic and many other languages well, and he carefully studied various religions. He was opposed to religious ceremonies and *pujas* and the like, and he pleaded for social reform and women's education. The society he founded was called the *Brahmo Samaj*. It was, and has remained, a small organization, so far as numbers go, and it has been confined to the English-knowing people of Bengal. But it has had considerable influence on the life of Bengal. The Tagore family took to it, and for long the poet Rabindranath's father, known as Maharshi Debendra Nath Tagore, was the prop and pillar of the *Samaj*. Another leading member was Keshab Chander Sen.

Later in the century another religious reform movement took place. This was in the Punjab, and the founder was Swami Dayananda Saraswati. Another society was started, called the *Arya Samaj*. This also rejected many of the later growths of Hinduism and combated caste. Its cry was ' back to the *Vedas*". Although it was a reforming movement, influenced no doubt by Muslim and Christian thought, it was in essence an aggressive militant movement. And so it happened, curiously, that the *Arya Samaj* which, of many Hindu sects, probably came nearest to Islam, became a rival and opponent of Islam. It was an attempt to convert the defensive and static Hinduism into an aggressive missionary religion. It was meant to revive Hinduism. What gave the movement some strength was a colouring of nationalism. It was, indeed, Hindu nationalism raising its head. And the very fact that it was Hindu nationalism made it difficult for it to become Indian nationalism.

The *Arya Samaj* was far more widespread than the *Brahmo Samaj*, especially in the Punjab. But it was largely confined to the middle classes. The *Samaj* has done a great deal of educational work, and has started many schools and colleges, both for boys and girls.

Another remarkable religious man of the century, but very different from the others I have mentioned in this letter, was Ramakrishna Paramhansa. He did not start any aggressive society for reform. He laid stress on service, and the *Ramakrishna Sevashrams* in many parts of the country are carrying on this tradition of service of the weak and poor. A famous disciple of Ramakrishna's was Swami Vivekananda, who very eloquently and forcibly preached the gospel of nationalism. This was not in any way anti-Muslim or anti anyone else, nor was it the somewhat narrow nationalism of the *Arya Samaj*. None the less Vivekananda's nationalism was Hindu nationalism, and it had its roots in Hindu religion and culture.

Thus it is interesting to note that the early waves of nationalism in India in the nineteenth century were religious and Hindu. The Muslims naturally could take no part in this Hindu nationalism. They kept apart. Having kept away from English education, the new ideas affected them less, and there was far less intellectual ferment amongst them. Many decades later they began to come out of their shell, and then, as with the Hindus, their nationalism took the shape of a Muslim nationalism, looking back to Islamic traditions and culture, and fearful of losing these because of the Hindu majority. But this Muslim movement became evident much later, towards the end of the century.

Another interesting thing to note is that these reform and progressive movements in Hinduism and Islam tried to fit in, as far as possible, the new scientific and political ideas derived from the West with their old religious notions and habits. They were not prepared to challenge and examine fearlessly these old notions and habits ; nor could they ignore the new world of science and political and social ideas which lay around them. So they tried to harmonize the two by trying to show that all modern ideas and progress could be traced back to the old sacred books of their religions. This attempt was bound to end in failure. It merely prevented people from thinking straight. Instead of thinking boldly and trying to understand the new forces and ideas which were changing the world, they were oppressed by the weight of ancient habit and

tradition. Instead of looking ahead and marching ahead, they were all the time furtively looking back. It is not easy to go ahead, if the head is always turned and looks back.

The English-educated class grew slowly in the cities, and at the same time a new middle class arose consisting of professional people—that is, lawyers and doctors and the like, and merchants and traders There had been, of course, a middle class in the past, but this was largely crushed by the early British policy. The new *bourgeoisie*, or middle class, was a direct outcome of British rule ; in a sense they were the hangers-on of this rule. They shared to a small extent in the exploitation of the masses ; they took the crumbs that fell from the richly laden table of the British ruling classes. They were petty officials helping in the British administration of the country ; many were lawyers assisting in the working of the law courts and growing rich by litigation ; and there were merchants, the go-betweens of British trade and industry, who sold British goods for a profit or commission.

The great majority of these people of the new *bourgeoisie* were Hindus. This was due to their somewhat better economic condition, as compared to the Muslims, and also to their taking to English education, which was a passport to government service and the professions. The Muslims were generally poorer. Most of the weavers, who had gone to the wall on account of the British destruction of Indian industries, were Muslims. In Bengal, which has the biggest Muslim population of any Indian province, they were poor tenants or small land-holders. The landlord was usually a Hindu, and so was the village *bania*, who was the money-lender and the owner of the village store. The landlord and the *bania* were thus in a position to oppress the tenant and exploit him, and they took full advantage of this position. It is well to remembr this fact, for in this lies the root cause of the tension between Hindu and Muslim.

In the same way the higher-caste Hindus, especially in the south, exploited the so-called "depressed" classes, who were mostly workers on the land. The problem of the depressed

classes has been very much before us recently, and especially since Bapu's fast. Untouchability has been attacked all along the front, and hundreds of temples and other places have been thrown open to these classes. But right down at the bottom of the question is this economic exploitation, and unless this goes, the depressed classes will remain depressed. The untouchables have been agricultural serfs who were not allowed to own land. They had other disabilities also.

Although India as a whole and the masses grew poorer, the handful of people comprising the new *bourgeoisie* prospered to some extent because they shared in the country's exploitation. The lawyers and other professional people and the merchants accumulated some money. They wanted to invest this, so that they could have an income from interest. Many of them bought up land from the impoverished landlords, and thus they became themselves landowners. Others, seeing the wonderful prosperity of English industry, wanted to invest their money in factories in India. So Indian capital went into these big machine factories and an Indian industrial capitalist class began to arise. This was about fifty years ago, after 1880.

As this *bourgeoisie* grew, their appetite also grew. They wanted to get on, to make more money, to have more posts in government service, more facilities for starting factories. They found the British obstructing them in every path. All the high posts were monopolized by the British, and industry was run for the profit of the British. So they began agitating, and this was the origin of the new nationalist movement. After the revolt of 1857 and its cruel suppression, people had been too much broken up for any agitation or aggressive movement. It took them many years to revive a little

Nationalist ideas were soon spreading, and Bengal was taking the lead. New books came out in Bengali, and they had a great influence on the language as well as on the development of nationalism in Bengal. It was in one of these books, ***Ananda Matha,*** by Bankim Chandra Chatterji, that our famous song *Vande Matram* occurs. A Bengali poem which created a stir was *Nil Darpan*—the mirror of indigo. It gave a very

painful account of the miseries of the Bengali peasantry under the plantation system, of which I have told you something.

Meanwhile the power of Indian capital was also increasing, and it demanded more elbow-room to grow. At last in 1885 all these various elements of the new *bourgeoisie* determined to start an organization to plead their cause. Thus was the Indian National Congress founded in 1885. This organization, which you and every boy and girl in India know well, has become in recent years great and powerful. It took up the cause of the masses and became, to some extent, their champion. It challenged the very basis of British rule in India, and led great mass movements against it. It raised the banner of independence and fought for freedom manfully. And to-day it is still carrying on the fight. But all this is subsequent history. The National Congress when it was first founded was a very moderate and cautious body, affirming its loyalty to the British and asking, very politely, for some petty reforms. It represented the richer *bourgeoisie*; even the poorer middle classes were not in it. As for the masses, the peasants and workers, they had nothing to do with it. It was the organ of the English-educated classes chiefly, and it carried on its activities in our step-mother tongue—the English language. Its demands were the demands of the landlords and Indian capitalists and the educated unemployed seeking for jobs. Little attention was paid to the grinding poverty of the masses or their needs. It demanded the "Indianization" of the services—that is to say, the greater employment of Indians in government service in place of Englishmen. It did not see that what was wrong with India was the machine which exploited the people, and that it made no difference who had charge of the machine, Indian or foreigner. The Congress further complained of the huge expenses of the English officials in the military and civil services, and of the "drain" of gold and silver from India to England.

Do not think that in pointing out how moderate the early Congress was I am criticizing it or trying to belittle it. That is not my purpose, for I believe that the Congress in those days and its leaders did great work. The hard facts of Indian

politics drove it step by step, almost unwillingly, to a more and more extreme position. But in the early days it could not have been anything but what it was. And in those days it required great courage for its founders to go ahead. It is easy enough for us to talk bravely of freedom when the crowd is with us and praises us for it. But it is very difficult to be the pioneer in a great undertaking.

The first Congress was held in Bombay in 1885. W.C. Bonnerji of Bengal was the first president. Other prominent names of those early days are Surendra Nath Banerji, Badruddin Tyabji, Pherozeshah Mehta. But one name towers above all others—that of Dadabhai Naoroji, who became the *Grand Old Man of India* and who first used the word *Swaraj* for India's goal. One other name I shall tell you, for he is the sole survivor to-day of the old guard of the Congress, and you know him well. He is Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya. For over fifty years he has laboured in India's cause, and, worn down with years and anxiety, he labours still for the realization of the dream he dreamed in the days of his youth.

So the Congress went on from year to year and gained in strength. It was not narrow in its appeal like the Hindu nationalism of an earlier day. But still it was in the main Hindu Some leading Muslims joined it, and even presided over it, but the Muslims as a whole kept away. A great Muslim leader of the day was Sir Syed Ahmad Khan. He saw that lack of education, and especially modern education, had injured the Muslims greatly and kept them backward. He felt therefore that he must persuade them to take to this education and to concentrate on it, before dabbling in politics. So he advised the Muslims to keep away from the Congress, and he co-operated with the government and founded a fine college in Aligarh, which has since grown into a university. Sir Syed's advice was followed by the great majority of the Muslims, who did not join the Congress. But a small minority was always with it. Remember that when I refer to majorities and minorities I mean the majority or minority of the upper middle class, English-educated, Muslims and Hindus. The masses, both

Hindu and Muslim, had nothing to do with the Congress, and very few had even heard of it in those days. Even the lower middle classes were not affected by it then.

The Congress grew, but even faster than the Congress grew the ideas of nationality and the desire for freedom. The Congress appeal was necessarily limited because it was confined to the English-knowing people To some extent this helped in bringing different provinces nearer to each other and developing a common outlook. But because it did not go down deep to the people, it had little strength. I have told you in another letter of an occurrence which stirred Asia greatly. This was the victory of little Japan over giant Russia in 1904-5. India, in common with other Asiatic countries, was vastly impressed, that is, the educated middle classes were impressed, and their self-confidence grew. If Japan could make good against one of the most powerful European countries, why not India ? For long the Indian people had suffered from a feeling of inferiority before the British. The long domination by the British, the savage suppression of the Revolt of 1857, had cowed them. By an Arms Act they were prevented from keeping arms. In everything that happened in India they were reminded that they were the subject race, the inferior race. Even the education that was given to them filled them with this idea of inferiority. Perverted and false history taught them that India was a land where anarchy had always prevailed, and Hindus and Muslims had cut each other's throats, till the British came to rescue the country from this miserable plight and give it peace and prosperity. Indeed, the whole of Asia, the Europeans believed and proclaimed, regard, less of fact or history, was a backward continent which must remain under European domination.

The Japanese victory, therefore, was a great pick-me-up for Asia. In India it lessened the feeling of inferiority, from which most of us suffered. Nationalist ideas spread more widely, especially in Bengal and Maharashtra. Just then an event took place which shook Bengal to the depths and stirred the whole of India. The British Government divided up the great pro-

vince of Bengal (which at that time included Bihar) into two parts, one of these being Eastern Bengal. The growing nationalism of the *bourgeoisie* in Bengal resented it. It suspected that the British wanted to weaken them by thus dividing them. Eastern Bengal had a majority of Muslims, so by this division a Hindu-Muslim question was also raised. A great anti-British movement rose in Bengal. Most of the land-holders joined it, and so did Indian capitalists. The cry of *Swadeshi* was first raised then, and with it the boycott of British goods, which of course helped Indian industry and capital. The movement even spread to the masses to some extent, and partly it drew its inspiration from Hinduism. Side by side with it there arose in Bengal a school of revolutionary violence, and the bomb first made its appearance in Indian politics. Aurobindo Ghose was one of the brilliant leaders of the Bengal movement. He still lives, but for many years he has lived a retired life in Pondicherry, which is in French India.

In western India, in the Maharashtra country, there was also a great ferment at this time and a revival of an aggressive nationalism, tinged also with Hinduism. A great leader arose there, Bal Gangadhar Tilak, known throughout India as the Lokamanya, the "Honoured of the People". Tilak was a great scholar, learned alike in the old ways of the East and the new ways of the West ; he was a great politician ; but, above all, he was a great mass leader. The leaders of the National Congress had so far appealed only to the English-educated Indians ; they were little known by the masses. Tilak was the first political leader of the new India who reached the masses and drew strength from them. His dynamic personality brought a new element of strength and indomitable courage, and, added to the new spirit of nationalism and sacrifice in Bengal, it changed the face of Indian politics.

What was the Congress doing during these stirring days of 1906 and 1907 and 1908 ? The Congress leaders, far from leading the nation at the time of this awakening of the national spirit, hung back. They were used to a quieter brand of politics in which the masses did not intrude. They did not like the flaming enthusiasm of Bengal, nor did they feel at home with

the new unbending spirit of Maharashtra, as embodied in Tilak They praised *Swadeshi* but hesitated at the boycott of British goods. Two parties developed in the Congress—the extremists under Tilak and some Bengal leaders and the moderates under the older Congress leaders. The most prominent of the moderate leaders, was, however, a young man, Gopal Krishna Gokhale, a very able man who had devoted his life to service. Gokhale was also from Maharashtra. Tilak and he faced each other from their rival groups and, inevitably, the split came in 1907 and the Congress was divided. The moderates continued to control the Congress, the extremists were driven out. The moderates won, but it was at the cost of their popularity in the country, for Tilak's party was far the more popular with the people. The Congress became weak and for some years had little influence.

And what of the government during these years ? How did it react to the growth of Indian nationalism ? Governments have only one method of meeting an argument or a demand which they do not like—the use of the bludgeon. So the government indulged in repression and sent people to prison, and curbed the newspapers with Press laws, and let loose crowds of secret policemen and spies to shadow everybody they did not like. Since those days the members of the C.I.D. in India have been the constant companions of prominent Indian politicians. Many of the Bengal leaders were sentenced to imprisonment. The most noted trial was that of Lokamanya Tilak, who was sentenced to six years, and who during his imprisonment in Mandalay wrote a famous book. Lala Lajpat Rai was also deported to Burma.

But repression did not succeed in crushing Bengal. So a measure of reform in the administration was hurried up to appease some people at least. The policy was then, as it was later and is now, to split up the nationalist ranks. The moderates were to be "rallied" and the extremists crushed. In 1908 these new reforms, called the Morley-Minto reforms, were announced. They succeeded in "rallying the moderates", who were pleased with them. The extremists, with the leaders in gaol, were demoralized and the national movement weaken-

ed. In Bengal, however, the agitation against the partition continued and ended with success. In 1911 the British Government reversed the partition of Bengal. This triumph put new heart in the Bengalis. But the movement of 1907 had spent itself, and India relapsed into political apathy.

In 1911 also it was proclaimed that Delhi was to be the new capital—Delhi, the seat of many an empire, and the grave also of many an empire.

So stood India in 1914 when the World War broke out in Europe and ended the 100-year period. That war also affected India tremendously, but of that I shall have something to say later.

I have done, at long last, with India in the nineteenth century. I have brought you to within eighteen years of to-day. And now we must leave India and, in the next letter, go to China and examine another type of imperialist exploitation.

NON-VIOLENCE AND THE DOCTRINE OF THE SWORD*

The sudden suspension of our movement after the Chauri Chaura incident was resented, I think, by almost all the prominent Congress leaders—other than Gandhiji of course. My father (who was in gaol at the time) was much upset by it. The younger people were naturally even more agitated. Our mounting hopes tumbled to the ground, and this mental reaction was to be expected. What troubled us even more were the reasons given for this suspension and the consequences that seemed to flow from them. Chauri Chaura may have been and was a deplorable occurrence and wholly opposed to the spirit of the non-violent movement; but were a remote village and a mob of excited peasants in an out-of-the-way place going to put an end, for some time at least, to our national struggle for freedom? If this was the inevitable consequence of a sporadic act of violence, then surely there was something lacking in the philosophy and technique of a non-violent struggle. For it

*From Nehru's *An Autobiography*, Chapter XII.

seemed to us to be impossible to guarantee against the occurrence of some such untoward incident. Must we train the three hundred and odd millions of India in the theory and practice of non-violent action before we could go forward? And, even so, how many of us could say that under extreme provocation from the police we could be able to remain perfectly peaceful? But even if we succeeded, what of the numerous *agents provocateurs*, stool pigeons, and the like who crept into our movement and indulged in violence themselves or induced others to do so? If this was the sole condition of its function, then the non-violent method of resistance would always fail.

We had accepted that method, the Congress had made that method its own, because of a belief in its effectiveness. Gandhiji had placed it before the country not only as the right method but as the most effective one for our purpose. In spite of its negative name it was a dynamic method, the very opposite of a meek submission to a tyrant's will. It was not a coward's refuge from action, but the brave man's defiance of evil and national subjection. But what was the use of the bravest and the strongest if a few odd persons—may be even our opponents in the guise of friends—had the power to upset or end our movement by their rash behaviour?

Gandhiji had pleaded for the adoption of the way of non-violence, of peaceful non-co-operation, with all the eloquence and persuasive power which he so abundantly possessed. His language had been simple and unadorned, his voice and appearance cool and clear and devoid of all emotion, but behind that outward covering of ice there was the heat of a blaring fire and concentrated passion, and the words he uttered winged their way to the innermost recesses of our minds and hearts, and created a strange ferment there. The way he pointed out was hard and difficult, but it was a brave path, and it seemed to lead to the promised land of freedom. Because of that promise we pledged our faith and marched ahead. In a famous article—"The Doctrine of the Sword"—he had written in 1920:

"I do believe that when there is only a choice between... cowardice and violence, I would advise violence.... I would rather have India resort to arms in order to defend her honour than that she should in a cowardly manner become or remain a helpless victim to her own dishonour. But I believe that non-violence is infinitely superior to violence, forgiveness is more manly than punishment.

"Forgiveness adorns a soldier. But abstinence is forgiveness only when there is power to punish ; it is meaningless when it pretends to proceed from a helpless creature. A mouse hardly forgives a cat when it allows itself to be torn to pieces by her ..But I do not believe India to be helpless, I do not believe myself to be a helpless creature...

"Let me not be misunderstood. Strength does not come from physical capacity. It comes from an indomitable will.

"I am not a visionary. I claim to be a practical idealist. The religion of non-violence is not meant merely for the Rishis and saints. It is meant for the common people as well. Non-violence is the law of our species as violence is the law of the brute. The spirit lies dormant in the brute and he known no law but that of physical might. The dignity of man requires obedience to a higher law—to the strength of the spirit.

"I have therefore ventured to place before India an ancient law of self-sacrifice. For Satyagrah and its off-shoots, non-co-operation and civil resistance, are nothing but new names for the law of suffering. The Rishis who discovered the law of non-violence in the midst of violence, were greater geniuses than Newton. They were themselves greater warriors than Wellington. Having themselves known the use of arms, they realised their uselessness and taught a weary world that its salvation lay not through violence but through non-violence.

"Non-violence in its dynamic condition means conscious suffering. It does not mean meek submission to the will of the evil-doer, but it means the putting of one's whole soul against the will of the tyrant. Working under this law of our being, it is possible for a single individual to defy the whole

the struggle. Was this the fault of the non-violant method itself or of Gandhiji's interpretation of it ? After all, he was the author and originator of it, and who could be a better judge of what it was and what it was not ? And without him where was our movement ?

Many years later, just before the 1930 Civil Disobedience movement began, Gandhiji, must to our satisfaction, made this point clear. He stated that the movement should not be abandoned because of the occurrence of sporadic acts of violence. If the non-violent method of struggle could not function because of such almost inevitable happenings, then it was obvious that it was not an ideal method for all occasions, and this he was not prepared to admit. For him the method, being the right method, should suit all circumstances and should be able to function, at any rate in a restricted way, even in a hostile atmosphere. Whether this interpretation, which widened the scope of non-violent action, represented an evolution in his own mind or not I do not know.

As a matter of fact even the suspension of civil resistance in February 1922 was certainly not due to Chauri Chaura alone, although most people imagined so. That was only the last straw. Gandhiji has often acted almost by instinct ; by long and close association with the masses he appears to have developed, as great popular leaders often do, a new sense which tells him how the mass feels, what it does and what it can do. He reacts to this instinctive feeling and fashions his action accordingly, and later, for the benefit of his surprised and resentful colleagues, tries to clothe his decision with reasons. This covering is often very inadequate, as it seemed after Chauri Chaura. At that time our movement, in spite of its apparent power and the widespread enthusiasm, was going to pieces. All organisation and discipline was disappearing ; almost all our good men were in prison, and the masses had so far received little training to carry on by themselves. Any unknown man who wanted to do so could take charge of a Congress Committee and, as a matter of fact, large numbers of undesirable men, including *agents pro-*

vocateurs, came to the front and even controlled some local Congress and Khilafat organisations. There was no way of checking them.

This kind of thing is, of course, to some extent almost inevitable in such a struggle. The leaders must take the lead in going to prison, and trust to others to carry on. All that can be done is to train the masses in some simple kinds of activity and, even more so, to abstain from certain other kinds of activity. In 1930 we had already spent several years in giving some such training, and the Civil Disobedience movement then and in 1932 was a very powerful and organised affair. This was lacking in 1921 and 1922, and there was little behind the excitement and enthusiasm of the people. There is little doubt that if the movement had continued there would have been growing sporadic violence in many places. This would have been crushed by Government in a bloody manner and a reign of terror established which would have thoroughly demoralised the people.

These were probably the reasons and influences that worked in Gandhiji's mind, and granting his premises and the desirability of carrying on with the technique of non-violence, his decision was right. He had to stop the rot and build anew. From another and an entirely different view-point his decision might be considered wrong, but that view-point had nothing to do with the non-violent method. It was not possible to have it both ways. To invite a bloody suppression of the movement in that particular sporadic way and at that stage would not, of course, have put an end to the national movement, for such movements have a way of rising from their ashes. Temporary set-backs are often helpful in clarifying issues and in giving backbone ; what matters is not a set-back or apparent defeat, but the principles and ideals. If these principles can be kept untarnished by the masses, then recovery comes soon. But what were our principles and objectives in 1921 and 1922 ? A vague Swaraj with no clear ideology behind it and a particular technique of non-violent struggle. The latter method would naturally have gone if the

country had taken to sporadic violence on any big scale, and as to the former, there was little to hold on to. The people generally were not strong enough to carry on the struggle for long and, in spite of almost universal discontent with foreign rule and sympathy with the Congress, there was not enough backbone or organisation. They could not last. Even the crowds that went to prison did so on the spur of the moment, expecting the whole thing to be over very soon.

It may be, therefore, that the decision to suspend civil resistance in 1922 was a right one, though the manner of doing it left much to be desired and brought about a certain demoralisation.

It is possible, however, that this sudden bottling up of a great movement contributed to a tragic development in the country. The drift to sporadic and futile violence in the political struggle was stopped, but the suppressed violence had to find a way out, and in the following years this perhaps aggravated the communal trouble. The communalists of various denominations, mostly political reactionaries, had been forced to lie low because of the overwhelming mass support for the non-co-operation and civil disobedience movement. They emerged now from their retirement. Many others, secret service agents and people who sought to please the authorities by creating communal friction, also worked on the same theme. The Moplah rising and its extra-ordinarily cruel suppression—what a horrible thing was the baking to death of the Moplah prisoners in the closed railway vans !—had already given a handle to those who stirred the waters of communal discord. It is just possible that if civil resistance had not been stopped and the movement had been crushed by Government, there would have been less communal bitterness and less superfluous energy left for the subsequent communal riots.

Before civil resistance was called off an incident occurred which might have led to different results. The first wave of civil resistance amazed and frightened the Government. It was then that Lord Reading, the Viceroy, said in a public

speech that he was troubled and perplexed. The Prince of Wales was in India, and his presence added greatly to the Government's responsibility. An attempt was made by the Government in December 1921, soon after the mass arrests at the beginning of the month, to come to some understanding with the Congress. This was especially in view of the Prince's forthcoming visit to Calcutta. There were some informal talks between representatives of the Bengal Government and Deshbandhu Das, who was in gaol then. A proposal seems to have been made, that a small round table conference might take place between the Government and the Congress. This proposal appears to have fallen through because Gandhiji insisted that Maulana Mohamad Ali, who was then in prison in Karachi, should be present at this conference. Government would not agree to this.

Mr. C.R Das did not approve of Gandhiji's attitude in this matter and, when he came out of prison later, he publicly criticised him and said that he had blundered. Most of us (we were in gaol) do not know the details of what took place then, and it is difficult to judge without all the facts. It seems, however, that little good could have come out of the conference at that stage. It was an effort on the part of Government to tide over somehow the period of the Prince's visit to Calcutta. The basic problems that faced us would have remained. Nine years later, when the nation and the Congress were far stronger, such a conference took place without any great results. But, apart from this, it seems to me that Gandhiji's insistence on Mohamad Ali's presence was perfectly justified. Not only as a Congress leader but as the leader of the Khilafat movement—and the Khilafat question was then an important plank in the Congress programme—his presence was essential. No policy or manoeuvre can ever be a right one if it involves the forsaking of a colleague. The fact that Government were not prepared to release him from gaol itself shows that there was no likelihood of any results from a conference.

Both my father and I had been sentenced to six months' imprisonment on different charges and by different courts.

The trials were farcical and, as was our custom, we took no part in them. It was easy enough, of course, to find enough material in our speeches or other activities for a conviction. But the actual choice was amusing. Father was tried as a member of an illegal organisation, the Congress Volunteers, and to prove this a form with his signature in Hindi was produced. The signature was certainly his, but, as it happened, he had hardly ever signed in Hindi before, and very few persons could recognise his Hindi signature. A tattered gentleman was then produced who swore to the signature. The man was quite illiterate, and he held the signature upside down when he examined it. My daughter, aged four at the time, had her first experience of the dock during father's trial, as he held her in his arms throughout.

My offence was distributing notices for a *hartal*. This was no offence under the law then, though I believe it is one now, for we are rapidly advancing towards Dominion Status. However, I was sentenced. Three months later I was informed in the prison, where I was with my father and others, that some revising authority had come to the conclusion that I was wrongly sentenced and I was to be discharged. I was surprised, as no one had taken any step on my behalf. The suspension of civil resistance had apparently galvanised the revising judges into activity. I was sorry to go out, leaving my father behind.

I decided to go almost immediately to Gandhiji in Ahmedabad. Before I arrived there he had been arrested, and my interview with him took place in Sabarmati Prison. I was present at his trial. It was a memorable occasion, and those of us who were present are not likely ever to forget it. The judge, an Englishman, behaved with dignity and feeling. Gandhiji's statement to the court was a most moving one, and we came away, emotionally stirred, and with the impress of his vivid phrases and striking images in our mind.

I came back to Allahabad. I felt unhappy and lonely outside the prison when so many of my friends and colleagues were behind prison bars. I found that the Congress organisation was not functioning well and I tried to put it straight. In

particular I interested myself in the boycott of foreign cloth. This item of our programme still continued in spite of the withdrawal of civil resistance. Nearly all the cloth merchants in Allahabad had pledged themselves not to import or purchase foreign cloth, and had formed an association for the purpose. The rules of this association laid down that any infringement would be punished by a fine. I found that several of the big dealers had broken their pledges and were importing foreign cloth. This was very unfair to those who stuck to their pledges. We remonstrated with little result, and the cloth dealers' association seemed to be powerless to take action. So we decided to picket the shops of the erring merchants. Even a hint of picketing was enough for our purpose. Fines were paid, pledges were taken afresh. The money from the fines went to the cloth merchants' association.

Two or three days later I was arrested, together with a number of colleagues who had taken part in the negotiations with the merchants. We were charged with criminal intimidation and extortion! I was further charged with some other offences, including sedition. I did not defend myself, but I made a long statement in court. I was sentenced on at least three counts, including intimidation and extortion, but the sedition charge was not proceeded with, as it was probably considered that I had already got as much as I deserved. As far as I remember there were three sentences, two of which were for eighteen months and were concurrent. In all, I think, I was sentenced to a year and nine months. That was my second sentence. I went back to prison after about six weeks spent outside it

THE LIBERAL OUTLOOK*

During my visit to Poona to see Gandhiji, I accompanied him one evening to the Servants of India Society's home. For an hour or so questions were put to him on political matters by some of the members of the Society, and he answered them. Mr. Srinivasa Sastri, the President of the Society, was not there,

*From Nehru's *An Autobiography*, Chapter LI.

nor was Pandit Hriday Nath Kunzru, probably the ablest of the other members, but some senior members were present. A few of us who were present on the occasion listened with growing amazement, for the questions related to the most trivial of happenings. Mostly they dealt with Gandhiji's old request for an interview with the Viceroy and the Viceroy's refusal. Was this the only important subject they could think of in a world full of problems, and when their own country was carrying on a hard struggle for freedom and hundreds of organisations were outlawed ? There was the agrarian crisis and the industrial depression causing widespread unemployment. There were the dreadful happenings in Bengal and the Frontier and in other parts of India, the suppression of freedom of thought and speech and writing and assembly ; and so many other national and international problems. But the questions were limited to unimportant happenings, and the possible reactions of the Viceroy and the Government of India to an approach by Gandhiji.

I had a strong feeling as if I had entered a monastery, the inhabitants of which had long been cut off from effective contact with outside world. And yet our friends were active politicians, able men with long records of public service and sacrifice. They formed, with a few others, the real backbone of the Liberal Party. The rest of the Party was a vague, amorphous lot of people, who wanted occasionally to have the sensation of being connected with political activities. Some of these, especially in Bombay and Madras, were indistinguishable from Government officials.

The questions that a country puts are a measure of that country's political development. Often the failure of that country is due to the fact that it has not put the right question to itself. Our wasting our time and energy and tempers over the communal distribution of seats, or our forming parties on the Communal Award and carrying on a sterile controversy about it to the exclusion of vital problems, is a measure of our political backwardness. In the same way the questions that were put to Gandhiji that day in the Servants of India Society's home mirrored the strange mental state of that Society and of

the Liberal Party. They seemed to have no political or economic principles, no wide outlook, and their politics seemed to be of the parlour or court variety—what high officials would do or would not do.

One is apt to be misled by the name 'Liberal Party'. The word elsewhere, and especially in England, stood for a certain economic policy—free trade and *laisser-faire*, etc.—and a certain ideology of individual freedom and civil liberties. The English Liberal tradition was based on economic foundations. The desire for freedom in trade and to be rid of the King's monopolies and arbitrary taxation, led to the desire for political liberty. The Indian Liberals have no such background. They do not believe in free trade, being almost all protectionists, and they attach little importance to civil liberties as recent events have shown. Their close contacts with and general support of the semi-feudal and autocratic Indian States, where even the beginnings of democracy and personal freedom are non-existent, also distinguish them from the European type of Liberal. Indeed the Indian Liberals are not liberal at all in any sense of the word, or at most they are liberal only in spots and patches. What they exactly are it is difficult to say, for they have no firm positive basis of ideas, and, though small in numbers, differ from one another. They are strong only in negation. They see error everywhere and attempt to avoid it, and hope that in doing so they will fi d the truth. Truth for them indeed always lies between two extremes. By criticising everything they consider extreme, they experience the feeling of being virtuous and moderate and good. This method helps them in avoiding painful and difficult processes of thought and in having to put forward constructive ideas. Capitalism, some of them vaguely feel, has not wholly succeeded in Europe, and is in trouble ; on the other hand socialism is obviously bad, because it attacks vested interests. Probably some mystic solution will be found in the future, some half-way house, and meanwhile vested interests should be protected. If there was an argument as to whether the earth was flat or round, probably they would condemn both these extreme views and suggest tentatively that it might be square or elliptical.

Over trivial and unimportant matters they grow quite excited, and there is an amazing amount of houha and shouting. Consciously and sub-consciously they avoid tackling fundamental issues, for such issues require fundamental remedies and the courage of thought and action. Hence Liberal defeats and victories are of little consequence. They relate to no principle. The leading characteristic of the Party and the distinguishing feature, if it can be considered so, is thus moderation in everything, good or bad. It is an outlook on life and the old name—the Moderates—was perhaps the most suitable.

"In moderation placing all my glory,

While Tories call me Whig and Whigs a Tory."[1]

But moderation, however admirable it might be, is not a bright and scintillating virtue. It produces dullness, and so the Indian Liberals have unhappily become a 'Dull Brigade'—sombre and serious in their looks, dull in their writing and conversation, and lacking in humour. Of course there are exceptions, and the most notable of these is Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru who, in his personal life, is certainly not dull or lacking in humour and who enjoys even a joke against himself. But on the whole the Liberal group represents bourgeoisdom *in excelesis* with all its pedestrian solidity. The *Leader* of Allahabad, which is the leading Liberal newspaper, had a revealing editorial note last year. It stated that great and unusual men had always brought trouble to the world, and therefore it preferred the ordinary, mediocre kind of man. With a fine and frank gesture it nailed its flag to mediocrity.

Moderation and conservatism and a desire to avoid risks and sudden changes are often the inevitable accompaniments of old age. They do not seem quite so appropriate in the young, but ours is an ancient land, and sometimes its children seem to be born tired and weary, with all the lack-lustre and marks of age upon them. But even this old country is now convulsed by the forces of change, and the moderate outlook

1. Alexander Pope.

is bewildered. The old world is passing, and all the sweet reasonableness of which the Liberals are capable does not make any difference ; they might as well argue with the hurricane or the flood or the earthquake. Old assumptions fail them, and they dare not seek for new ways of thought and action. Dr. A.N. Whitehead, speaking of the European tradition, says : "The whole of this tradition is warped by the vicious assumption that each generation will substantially live amid the conditions governing the lives of its fathers, and will transmit those conditions to mould with equal force the lives of its children. We are living in the first period of human history for which the assumption is false." Dr. Whitehead errs on the side of moderation in his analysis, for probably that assumption has always been untrue. If the European tradition has been conservative, how much more so has ours been ? But the mechanics of history pay little attention to these traditions when the time for change comes. We watch helplessly and blame others for the failure of our plans. And that, as Mr. Gerald Heard points out, is the "most disastrous of illusions, the projection that convinces itself that any failure in one's plans must be due not to a mistake in one's own thinking, but to a deliberate thwarting by someone else."

All of us suffer from this terrible illusion. I sometimes think that Gandhiji is not free from it But we act at least and try to keep in touch with life, and by trial and error sometimes lessen the power of the illusion and stumble along. But the Liberals suffer most. For they do not act for fear of acting wrongly, they do not move for fear of falling, they keep away from all healthy contacts with the masses, and sit enchanted and self-hypnotised in their mental cells. Mr. Srinivasa Sastri warned his fellow-Liberals a year and a half ago not to "stand by and let things pass." That warning had greater truth in it than he himself probably realised. Thinking always in terms of what the Government did, he was referring to the constitutional changes that were being hatched by various official committees. But the misfortune of the Liberals had been that they stood by and let things pass when their own people were marching ahead. They feared their own

masses, and they preferred to alienate themselves from these masses rather than fall out with our rulers. Was it any wonder that they became strangers in their own land, and life went by and left them standing ? When fierce struggles were waged for life and freedom by their countrymen, there was no doubt on which side of the barricade the Liberals stood. From the other side of that barricade they gave us good advice, and were full of moral platitudes, laying them on thick like sticky paint Their co-operation with the British Government in the round table conferences and committees was a moral factor of value to the Government. A denial of it would have made a difference. It was remarkable that at one of these conferences even the British Labour Party kept away ; not so our Liberals, who went in spite of an appeal by some Britishers to them not to do so.

We are all moderates or extremists in varying degress, and for various objects. If we care enough for anything we are likely to feel strongly about it, to be extremist about it. Otherwise we can afford a gracious tolerance, a philosophical moderation, which really hides to some extent our indifference. I have known the mildest of Moderates to grow very aggressive and extremist when a suggestion was made for the sweeping away of certain vested interests in land. Our Liberal friends represent to some extent the prosperous and well-to-do. They can afford to wait for Swaraj, and need not excite themselves about it. But any proposal for radical social change disturbs them greatly, and they are no longer moderate or sweetly reasonable about it. Thus their moderation is really confined to their attitude towards the British Government, and they nurse the hope that if they are sufficiently respectful and compromising perhaps, as a reward for this behaviour, they might be listened to. Inevitably they have to accept the British view-point. Blue books become their passionate study, Erskine May's *Parliamentary Practice* and such-like books their constant companions, a new Government Report a matter for excitement and speculation. Liberal leaders returning from England make mysterious statements about the doings of the great ones in Whitehall, for Whitehall is the Valhalla of Liberals, Responsivists and other similar groups. In the old days it was said that

good Americans when they died went to Paris, and it may be that the shades of good Liberals sometimes haunt the precincts of Whitehall.

I write of Liberals, but what I write applies to many of us also in the Congress. It applies even more to the Responsivists, who have outdistanced the Liberals in their moderation. There is a great deal of difference between the average Liberal and the average Congressman, and yet the dividing line is not clear and definite. Ideologically there is little to choose between the advanced Liberal and the moderate Congressman. But, thanks to Gandhiji, every Congressman has kept some touch with the soil and the people of the country, and he has dabbled in action, and because of this he has escaped some of the consequences of a vague and defective ideology. Not so the Liberals : they have lost touch with both the old and the new. As a group they represent a vanishing species.

Most of us, I suppose, have lost the old pagan feeling and not gained the new insight. Not for us to "have sight of Proteus rising from the sea"; or "hear old Triton blow his wreathed horn." And very few of us are fortunate enough—

"To see a World in a Grain of Sand
And a Heaven in a Wild Flower,
Hold Infinity in the palm of your hand
And Eternity in an hour."

Not for most of us, unhappily, to sense the mysterious life of Nature, to hear her whisper close to our ears, to thrill and quiver at her touch. Those days are gone. But though we may not see the sublime in Nature as we used to, we have sought to find it in the glory and tragedy of humanity, in its mighty dreams and inner tempests, its pangs and failures, its conflicts and misery, and, over all this, its faith in a great destiny and a realisation of those dreams. That has been some recompense for us for all the heart-breaks that such a search involves, and often we have been raised above the pettiness of life. But many have not undertaken this search, and having cut themselves adrift from the ancient ways, find no road to follow in the

present. They neither dream nor do they act. They have no understanding of human convulsions like the great French Revolution or the Russian Revolution. The complex, swift and cruel eruptions of human desires, long suppressed, frighten them. For them the Bastille has not yet fallen.

It is often said with righteous indignation that "Patriotism is not a monopoly of Congressmen" The same phrase is repeated again and again with a lack of originality which is somewhat distressing. I hope no Congressman has ever claimed a corner in this emotion. Certainly I do not think it is a Congress monopoly, and I would be glad to make a present of it to anyone who desired it. It is often enough the refuge of the opportunist and the careerist, and there are so many varieties of it to suit all tastes, all interests, all classes. If Judas had been alive to-day he would no doubt act in its name. Patriotism is no longer enough : we want something higher, wider and nobler.

Nor is moderation enough by itself. Restraint is good and is the measure of our culture, but behind that restraint there must be something to restrain and hold back. It has been, and is, man's destiny to control the elements, to ride the thunderbolt, to bring the raging fire and the rushing and tumbling waters to his use, but most difficult of all for him has been to restrain and hold in check the passions that consume him. So long as he will not master them, he cannot enter fully into his human heritage. But are we to restrain the legs that move not and the hands that are palsied ?

I cannot resist the temptation to quote four lines of Roy Campbell written on some South African novelists. They seem to be equally applicable to various political groups in India :

"They praise the firm restraint with which you write.
I'm with you there, of course.
You use the snaffle and the curb all right,
But where's the bloody horse ?"

Our Liberal friends tell us that they follow the narrow path of the golden mean, and steer themselves between the extremes

of the Congress and the Government. They constitute themselves the judges of the failings of both, and congratulate themselves that they are free from either. They endeavour to hold the scales and, like the figure of Justice, I suppose, they keep their eyes closed or bandaged. Is it my fancy merely that takes me back through the ages and makes me listen to that famous cry : "Scribes and Pharisees... . Ye blind guides, which strain at a gnat and swallow a camel !"

DOMINION STATUS AND INDEPENDENCE*

Most of those who have shaped Congress policy during the last seventeen years have come from the middle classes. Liberal or Congressmen, they have come from the same class and have grown up in the same environment. Their social life and contacts and friendships have been similar, and there was little difference to begin with between the two varieties of *bourgeois* ideals that they professed. Temperamental and psychological differences began to separate them, and they began to look in different directions—one group more towards the Government and the rich, upper middle class, the other towards the lower middle classes. The ideology still remained the same, the objectives did not differ, but behind the second group there was now the push of larger numbers from the market-place and the humbler professions as well as the unemployed intelligentsia. The tone changed ; it was no longer respectful and polite, but strident and aggressive. Lacking strength to act effectively, some relief was found in strong language. Frightened by this new development, the moderate elements dropped out and sought safety in seclusion. Even so, the upper middle class was strongly represented in the Congress, though in numbers the little *bourgeoisie* was predominant. They were drawn not only by the desire for success in their national struggle, but because they sought an inner satisfaction in that struggle. They sought thereby to recover their lost pride and self-respect, and to rehabilitate their shattered dignity. It was the usual nationalist urge, and though

*From Nehru's *An Autobiography*, Chapter LII.

this was common to all, it was here that the temperamental differences between the moderate and the extremist became evident. Gradually the lower middle class began to dominate the Congress, and later the peasantry made their influence felt.

As the Congress became more and more the representative of the rural masses, the gulf that separated it from the Liberals widened, and it became almost impossible for the Liberal to understand or appreciate the Congress viewpoint. It is not easy for the upper-class drawing-room to understand the humble cottage or the mud hut. Yet, in spite of these differences, both the ideologies were nationalist and *bourgeois* ; the variation was one of degree, not of kind. In the Congress many people remained to the last who would have been quite at home in the Liberal group.

For many generations the British treated India as a kind of enormous country-house (after the old English fashion) that they owned. They were the gentry owning the house and occupying the desirable parts of it, while the Indians were consigned to the servants' hall and pantry and kitchen. As in every proper country-house there was a fixed hierarchy in those lower regions—butler, housekeeper, cook, valet, maid, footman, etc.—and strict precedence was observed among them. But between the upper and lower regions of the house there was, socially and politically, an impassable barrier. The fact that the British Government should have imposed this arrangement upon us was not surprising ; but what does seem surprising is that we, or most of us, accepted it as the natural and inevitable ordering of our lives and destiny. We developed the mentality of a good country-house servant. Sometimes we were treated to a rare honour—we were given a cup of tea in the drawing-room. The height of our ambition was to become respectable and to be promoted individually to the upper regions. Greater than any victory of arms or diplomacy was this psychological triumph of the British in India. The slave began to think as a slave, as the wise men of old had said.

Times have changed, and the country-house type of civilisation is not accepted willingly now, either in England or India.

But still there remain people amongst us who desire to stick to the servants'-halls and take pride in the gold braid and livery of their service. Others, like the Liberals, accept that country-house in its entirety, admire its architecture and the whole edifice, but look forward to replacing the owners, one by one, by themselves. They call this Indianisation. For them the problem is one of changing the colour of the administration, or at most having a new administration. They never think in terms of a new State.

For them Swaraj means that everything continues as before, only with a darker shade. They can only conceive of a future in which they, or people like them, will play the principal role and take the place of the English high officials ; in which there are the same types of services, government departments, legislatures, trade, industry—with the I.C.S. at their jobs ; the princes in their palaces, occasionally appearing in fancy dress or carnival attire with all their jewels glittering to impress their subjects ; the landlords claiming special protection, and meanwhile harassing their tenants ; the money-leader, with his money-bags, harassing both zamindar and tenant ; the lawyer with his fees ; and God in His heaven.

Essentially their outlook is based on the maintenance of the *status quo*, and the changes they desire can almost be termed personal changes. And they seek to achieve these changes by a slow infiltration with the goodwill of the British. The whole foundation of their politics and economics rests on the continuance and stability of the British Empire. Looking on this Empire as unshakable, at least for a considerable time, they adapt themselves to it, and accept not only its political and economic ideology but also, to a large extent, its moral standards, which have all been framed to secure the continuance of British dominance.

The Congress attitude differs fundamentally from this because it seeks a new State and not just a different administration. What that new State is going to be may not be quite clear to the average Congressman, and opinions may differ about it. But it is common ground in the Congress (except

perhaps for a moderate fringe) that present conditions and methods cannot and must not continue, and basic changes are essential. Herein lies the difference between Dominion Status and Independence. The former envisages the same old structure, with many bonds visible and invisible tying us to the British economic system ; the latter gives us, or ought to give us, freedom to erect a new structure to suit our circumstances.

It is not a question of an implacable and irreconcilable antagonism to England and the English people, or the desire to break from them at all costs. It would be natural enough if there was bad blood between India and England after what has happened. "The clumsiness of power spoils the key and uses the pick-axe," says Tagore, and the key to our hearts was destroyed long ago, and the abundant use of the pick-axe on us has not made us partial to the British. But if we claim to serve the larger cause of India and humanity we cannot afford to be carried away by our momentary passions. And even if we were so inclined the hard training which Gandhiji has given us for the last fifteen years would prevent us. I write this sitting in a British prison, and for months past my mind has been full of anxiety, and I have perhaps suffered more during this solitary imprisonment than I have done in gaol before. Anger and resentment have often filled my mind at various happenings, and yet as I sit here, and look deep into my mind and heart, I do not find any anger against England or the English people. I dislike British imperialism and I resent its imposition on India ; I dislike the capitalist system ; I dislike exceedingly and resent the way India is exploited by the ruling classes of Britain. But I do not hold England or the English people as a whole responsible for this, and even if I did, I do not think it would make much difference, for it is a little foolish to lose one's temper at or to condemn a whole people. They are as much the victims of circumstances as we are.

Personally, I owe too much to England in my mental make-up ever to feel wholly alien to her. And, do what I will, I cannot get rid of the habits of mind, and the standards and ways of judging other countries as well as life generally, which

I acquired at school and college in England. All my predilections (apart from the political plane) are in favour of England and the English people, and if I have become what is called an uncompromising opponent of British rule in India, it is almost in spite of myself.

It is that rule, that domination, to which we object, and with which we cannot compromise willingly—not the English people. Let us by all means have the closest contacts with the English and other foreign peoples. We want fresh air in India, fresh and vital ideas, healthy co-operation; we have grown too musty with age. But if the English come in the role of a tiger they can expect no friendship or co-operation. To the tiger of imperialism there will only be the fiercest opposition, and to-day our country has to deal with that ferocious animal. It may be possible to tame the wild tiger of the forest and to charm away his native ferocity, but there is no such possibility of taming capitalism and imperialism when they combine and swoop down on an unhappy land

For any one to say that he or his country will not compromise is, in a sense, a foolish remark, for life is always forcing us to compromise. When applied to another country or people, it is completely foolish. But there is truth in it when it is applied to a system or a particular set of circumstances, and then it becomes something beyond human power to accomplish. Indian freedom and British imperialism are two incompatibles, and neither martial law nor all the sugar-coating in the world can make them compatible or bring them together. Only with the elimination of British imperialism from India will conditions be created which permit of real Indo-British cooperation.

We are told that independence is a narrow creed in the modern world, which is increasingly becoming inter-dependent, and therefore in demanding independence we are trying to put the clock back. Liberals and pacifists and even so-called socialists in Britain advance this plea and chide us for our narrow nationalism, and incidentally suggest to us that the way to a fuller national life is through the "British Common-

wealth of Nations." It is curious how all roads in England— iberalism, pacifism, socialism, etc.—lead to the maintenance of the Empire. "The desire of a ruling nation to maintain the *status quo*," says Trotsky, "frequently dresses up as a superiority to 'nationalism', just as the desire of a victorious nation to hang on to its booty easily takes the form of pacifism. Thus Mac-Donald, in the face of Gandhi, feels as though he were an internationalist."

I do not know what India will be like or what she will do when she is politically free. But I do know that those of her people who stand for national independence today stand also for the widest internationalism. For a socialist, nationalism can have no meaning, but even manv of the non-socialists in the advanced ranks of the Congress are confirmed internationalists. If we claim independence today it is with no desire for isolation. On the contrary, we are perfectly willing to surrender part of that independence, in common with other countries, to a real international order. Any imperial system, bv whatever high-sounding name it may be called, is an enemy of such an order, and it is not through such a system that world co-operation or world peace can be reached.

Recent developments have shown all over the world how the various imperialist systems are isolating themselves more and more by autarchy and economic imperialism. Instead of the growth of internationalism we see a reversal of the process. The reasons for this are not difficult to discover, and they indicate the growing weakness of the present economic order. One of the results of this policy is that while it produces greater co-operation within the area of autarchy, it also means isolation from the rest of the world. For India, as we have seen by Ottawa and other decisions, it has meant a progressive lessening of our ties and contacts with other countries. We have become, even more than we were, the hangers-on of British industry; and the dangers of this policy, apart from the immediate harm it has done in various ways, are obvious. Thus Dominion Status seems to lead to isolation and not to wider international contacts.

Our friends the Indian Liberals, however, have an amazing knack of seeing the world, and more particularly their own country, through British spectacles of true-blue colour. Without trying to appreciate what the Congress says and why it says so, they repeat the old British argument of independence being narrower and less soul-lifting than Dominion Status. Internationalism means for them Whitehall, for they are singularly ignorant of other countries, partly because of the language difficulty, but even more so because they are quite content to ignore them. They are, of course, averse to direct action or any kind of aggressive politics in India. But it is curious to note that some of their leaders have no objection to such methods being adopted in other countries. They can appreciate and admire them from a distance, and some of the present-day dictators of Western countries receive their mental homage.

Names are apt to mislead, but the real question before us in India is whether we are aiming at a new State or merely at a new administration. The Liberal answer is clear ; they want the latter and nothing more, and even that is a distant and progressive ideal. The words 'Dominion Status' are mentioned from time to time, but their real objective for the time being is expressed in those mystic words "responsibility at the centre." Not for them the full-blooded words : Power, Independence, Freedom, Liberty ; they sound dangerous. The lawyer's language and approach appeals to them far more, even though it may not enthuse the multitude. History has innumerable instances of individuals and groups facing perils and risking their lives for the sake of faith and freedom. It seems doubtful if any one will ever deliberately give up a meal or sleep less soundly for "responsibility at the centre" or any other legal phrase.

This, then, is their objective, and this is to be reached not by 'direct action' or any other form of aggressive action but, as Mr. Srinivasa Sastri put it, by a display of "wisdom, experience, moderation, power of persuasion, quiet influence and real efficiency." It is hoped that by our good behaviour and our

good work we shall ultimately induce our rulers to part with power. In other words, they resist us today because either they are irritated against us on account of our aggressive attitude, or they doubt our capacity, or both. This seems a rather naive analysis of imperialism and the present situation. That brilliant English writer, Professor R.H. Tawney, has written an appropriate and arresting passage dealing with the notion of gaining power in stages and with the co-operation of the ruling classes. He refers to the British Labour Party, but his words are even more applicable to India, for in England they have at least democratic institutions, where the will of the majority can, in theory, make itself felt. Professor Tawney writes :

"Onions can be eaten leaf by leaf, but you cannot skin a live tiger paw by paw ; vivisection is its trade, and it does the skining first....

"If there is any country where the privileged classes are simpletons, it is certainly not England. The idea that tact and amiability in presenting the Labour Party's case can hoodwink them into the belief that it is their case also, is as hopeless as an attempt to bluff a sharp solicitor out of a property of which he holds the title-deeds. The plutocracy consists of agreeable, astute, forcible, self-confident, and, when hard pressed, unscrupulous people, who know pretty well on which side their bread is buttered, and intend that the supply of butter shall not run short...If their position is seriously threatened, they will use every piece on the board, political and economic—the House of Lords, the Crown, the Press, disaffection in the Army, financial crisis, international difficulties, and even, as newspaper attacks on the pound in 1931 showed, the *emigre* trick of injuring one's country to protect one's pocket."

The British Labour Party is a powerful organisation. It is backed by the Trade Unions, with their millions of paying members, and a highly developed co-operative organisation, as well as many members and sympathisers among the professional classes. Britain has democratic parliamentary institutions based on adult suffrage, and a long tradition of civil liberty. In spite of all this, Mr. Tawney is of opinion—and recent events have

confirmed the soundness of this—that the Labour Party cannot hope to gain real power merely by smiling and persuasion, useful and desirable as both these approaches are. Mr. Tawney suggests that even if the Labour Party obtained a majority in the House of Commons, it would still be powerless to make any radical change in face of the opposition of the privileged classes, who hold so many political, social, economic, financial and military citadels. In India, it need hardly be pointed out, conditions are very different. There are no democratic institutions or traditions. We have instead a well-established practice of ordinance and dictatorial rule and the suppression of the liberties of the person, of speech, writing, assembly and the Press. Nor have the Liberals any strong organisation behind them. They have thus to rely on their smile alone.

Liberals are strongly opposed to any activity that is 'unconstitutional' or 'illegal'. In countries with democratic constitutions the word 'constitutional' has a wide significance. It controls the making of laws, it protects liberties, it checks the executive, it provides for the democratic methods of bringing about changes in the political and economic structure. But in India there is no such constitution and the word can mean no such thing.[1] To use it here is merely to introduce an idea which has no place in the India of to-day. The word 'constitutional' is often used here, strange to say, in support of the executive's more or less arbitrary actions. Or else it is used in the sense of 'legal'. It is far better to confine ourselves to the words 'legal' or 'illegal', though they are vague enough and vary from day to day.

A new ordinance or a new law creates new offences. To attend a public meeting may be an offence ; so also to ride a

1. Mr. C.Y. Chintamani, the eminent Liberal leader and editor-in-chief of the *Leader* newspaper, has himself laid stress on the lack of any kind of constitutional government in India, in his criticism in the U.P. Council, of the Report of the Parliamentary Joint Select Committee on India : "Better submit to the present unconstitutional government rather than to the more reactionary and further more unconstitutional government of the future."

bicycle, to wear certain clothes, not to be home by sunset, not to report oneself to the police daily—all these and numerous other acts are offences to-day in some part of India A certain act may be an offence in one part of the country and not in another. When these laws can be promulgated by an irresponsible executive at the shortest notice, the word 'legal' simply means the will of that executive and nothing more. Ordinarily that will is obeyed, willingly or sullenly, because the consequences of disobedience are unpleasant. But for any one to say that he will always obey it means abject submission to a dictatorship or irresponsible authority, the surrender of his conscience, and the impossibility of ever gaining freedom, so far as his activities are concerned.

In every democratic country today there is an argument going on as to whether radical economic changes can be brought about in the ordinary course through the constitutional machinery at their disposal. Many people are of opinion that this cannot be done, and some unusual and revolutionary method will have to be adopted. For our purpose in India the issue of this argument is immaterial, for we have no constitutional means of bringing about the changes we desire. If the White Paper or something like it is enacted, constitutional progress in many directions will be stopped completely. There is no way out except by revolution or illegal action. What then is one to do ? Give up all idea of change and resign oneself to fate ?

The position to-day in India is even more extraordinary. The Executive can and does prevent or restrict all manner of public activities. Any activity that is, in its opinion, dangerous for it is prohibited. Thus all effective public activity can be stopped, as it was stopped during the last three years. Submission to this means giving up all public work. That is an impossible position to take up.

No one can say that he will always and without fail act legally. Even in a democratic state occasions may arise when one's conscience compels one to act otherwise. In a despoti-

cally or arbitrarily governed country these occasions are bound to be more frequent ; indeed, in such a state the law loses all moral justification.

"Direct action is allied to dictatorship and not democracy, and those who wish to bring about the triumph of democracy must eschew direct action," say the Liberals. This is confused thinking and loose writing. Sometimes direct action—*e.g.* a workers' strike—may even be legal. But probably political action was meant. In Germany today under Hitler what kind of action is possible ? Either abject submission or illegal and revolutionary action. How could democracy be served there ?

Indian Liberals often refer to democracy, but most of them have no desire to go near it. Sir P.S. Sivaswamy Iyer, one of the most prominent of Liberal leaders, said in May 1934 : "In advocating the convention of a constituent assembly, the Congress places too much faith in the wisdom of the multitude, and does too little justice to the sincerity and ability of men who have taken part in various Round Table Conferences. I very much doubt whether the constituent assembly would have done better." Sir Sivaswamy's idea of democracy is thus something apart from the 'multitude', and fits in more with a collection of 'sincere and able' men nominated by the British Government. Further, he blesses the White Paper, for though "not fully satisfied" with it, "he thought it would be unwise for the country to oppose it wholesale". There appears to be no reason whatever why there should not be the most perfect co-operation between the British Government and Sir P S. Sivaswamy Iyer.

The withdrawal of civil disobedience by the Congress was naturally welcomed by the Liberals. It was also not surprising that they should take credit for their wisdom in having kept aloof from this "foolish and ill-advised movement." "Did we not say so ?" they told us. It was a strange argument. Because when we stood up and put up a good fight we were knocked down ; therefore, the moral pointed out was that standing up is a bad thing. Crawling is best and safest. It is quite

impossible to be knocked down or to fall from that horizontal position.

WHITHER INDIA*

The newcomer from prison has long been cut off from the rough and tumble of life and politics, and yet he has a certain advantage on his side. He can take a more detached view; he is not so much wrapped up in the controversies of the moment; he may be able to stress principles when others argue about petty tactics; he may actually see the realities under the surface of ever-changing phenomena.

Many people ask: What are we to do? The mouths of most of those who could answer, or help in framing the answer, are shut either in prison or outside. But free advice, often accompanied by threats, comes to us in an unending stream from those who rule us and their faithful followers in this land. They warn us and threaten us and cajole us and offer us good advice by turns, anxious to influence us and yet uncertain of the right approach to us. Let us leave them and their advice for the moment, such gifts, even when free, are apt to be suspect.

Right action cannot come out of nothing, it must be preceded by thought. Thought which is not meant to lead to action has been called an abortion; action which is not based on thought is chaos and confusion. It is worthwhile therefore to clear our minds of all the tangled webs that may have grown there, to forget for the moment the immediate problems before us, the difficult knots we have to unravel, the day to day worries, and go back a little to basic facts and principles. What exactly do we want? And why do we want it?

I write with diffidence because I have for long been cut off from the nationalist press, but I have a feeling that little attention is paid to these basic facts and principles. The censorship may be partly to blame for this, or the fear of it, but even that,

*A monograph written by Nehru and published in the form of series of articles in October, 1933.

I think, is not a sufficient explanation. Attention seems to be concentrated on the most trivial of issues and vital matters are ignored. Should Gandhiji see the Viceroy or not ? Will Stanley Baldwin triumph over Winston Churchil ? What has Sir Samuel Hoare said or not said ? Are we going to get that wonderful thing called 'Central Responsibility' or not ? Hardly a reference to what we are driving at, hardly a thought of real issues.

Never in the long range of history has the world been in such a state of flux as it is today. Never has there been so much anxious questioning, so much doubt and bewilderment, so much examining of old institutions, existing ills and suggested remedies. There is a continuous process of change and revolution going on all over the world, and everywhere anxious statesmen are almost at their wits' end and grope about in the dark. It is obvious that we are a part of this great world problem and must be affected by world events. And yet, judging from the attention paid to these events in India, one would not think so. Major events are recorded in the news columns of papers but little attempt is made to see behind and beneath them, to understand the forces that are shaking and reforming the world before our eyes, to comprehend the essential nature of social, economic and political reality. History, whether past or present, becomes just a magic show with little rhyme or reason, and with no lesson for us which might guide our future path. On the gaily decked official stage of India or England phantom figures come and go, posing for a while as great statesmen ; Round Tablers flirt about like pale shadows of those who created them, engaged in pitiful and interminable talk which interests few and affects an even smaller number. Their main concern is how to save the vested interests of various classes or groups ; their main diversion, apart from feasting, is self-praise. Others, blissfully ignorant of all that has happened in the last half a century, still talk the jargon of the Victorian Age and are surprised and resentful that nobody listens to them. Even the nasmyth hammer of war and revolution and world change has failed to produce the slightest dent on their remarkably hard heads. Yet others hide vested

interests under cover of communalism or even nationalism. And then there is the vague but passionate nationalism of many who find present conditions intolerable and hunger for national freedom without clearlv realising what form that freedom will take. And there are also here, as in many other countries, the usual accompaniments of a growing nationalism—an idealism, a mysticism, a feeling of exaltation, a belief in the mission of one's country, and something of the nature of religious revivalism. Essentially all these are middle class phenomena.

Our politics must either be those of magic or of science. The former of course requires no argument or logic; the latter is in theory at least entirely based on clarity of thought and reasoning and has no room for vague idealistic or religious or sentimental processes which confuse and befog the mind. Personally, I have no faith in or use for the ways of magic and religion and I can only consider the question on scientific grounds.

What then are we driving at? Freedom? Swaraj? Independence? Dominion Status? Words which may mean much or little or nothing at all. Egypt is 'independent' and yet, as everybody knows, it is at present little better than an Indian state, an autocracy imposed upon an unwilling people and propped up by the British. Economically, Egypt is a colony of some of the European imperialist Powers, notably the British. Ever since the World War there has been continuous conflict between Egyptian nationalism and the ruling authorities and this continues today. So in spite of a so-called 'independence' Egypt is very far from even national freedom.

Again, whose freedom are we particularly striving for, for nationalism covers many sins and includes many a conflicting element? There is the feudal India of the princes, the India of the big zamindars, or small zamindars, of the professional classes, of the agriculturists, of the industrialists, of the bankers, of the lower middle class, of the workers. There are the interests of foreign capital and those of home capital, of

foreign services and home services. The nationalist answer is to prefer home interests to foreign interests but beyond that it does not go. It tries to avoid disturbing the class divisions or the social *status quo*. It imagines that the various interests will somehow be accommodated when the country is free. Being essentially a middle class movement, nationalism works chiefly in the interests of that class. It is obvious that there are serious conflicts between various interests in a country, and every law, every policy which is good for one interest may be harmful for another. What is good for the Indian prince may be thoroughly bad for the people of his state, what is profitable for the zamindar may ruin many of his tenants, what is demanded by foreign capital may crush the rising industries of the country.

Nothing is more absurd than to imagine that all the interests in the nation can be fitted in without injury to any. At every step some have to be sacrificed for others. A currency policy may be good for creditors or debtors, not for both at the same time. Inflation, resulting in a reduction or even wiping off of debts, will be welcomed by all debtors and by industry as a rule, but cursed by bankers and those who have fixed incomes. Early in the nineteenth century, England deliberately sacrificed her agriculture for her rising industry. A few years ago, in 1923, by insisting on keeping the value of the pound sterling at par she sacrificed, to some extent, her industry to her banking and financial system, and faced industrial troubles and a huge general strike.

Any number of such instances can be given ; they deal with the rival claims of different groups of the possessing classes. A more vital conflict of interest arises between these possessing classes as a whole and the others ; between the 'haves' and 'have-nots'. All this is obvious enough, but every effort is made to confuse the real issue by the holders of power, whether political or economic. The British Government is continually declaring before high heaven that they are trustees for our masses and India and England have common interests and can march hand in hand to a common destiny. Few people are taken in by this because nationalism makes us realize the

inherent conflict between the two national interests. But nationalism does not make us realize the equally inherent and fundamental conflict between economic interests within the nation. There is an attempt to cover this up and avoid it on the ground that the national issue must be settled first. Appeals are issued for unity between different classes and groups to face the common national foe, and those who point out the inherent conflict between landlord and tenant, or capitalist and wage labourer are criticized.

We may take it that the average person does not like conflict and continuous tension ; he prefers peace and quiet, and is even prepared to sacrifice much for it. But the ostrich-like policy of refusing to see a conflict and a disorder which not only exist but are eating into society's vitals, to blind oneself to reality, will not end the conflict and the disorder or suddenly change reality into unreality ; for a politician or a man of action such a policy can only end in disaster. It is therefore essential that we keep this in mind and fashion our idea of freedom accordingly. We cannot escape having to answer the question, now or later for the freedom of which class or classes in India are we especially striving for ? Do we place the masses, the peasantry and the workers first, or some other small class at the head of our list ? Let us give the benefits of freedom to as many groups and classes as possible, but essentially whom do we stand for, and when a conflict arises whose side must we take ? To say that we shall not answer that question now is itself an answer and taking of sides, for it means that we stand by the existing order, the *siatus quo*.

The form of government is after all a means to an end ; even freedom itself is a means, the end being human well-being human growth, the end of poverty and disease and suffering and the opportunity for every-one to live the 'good life', physically and mentally. What the 'good life' is, is a matter we cannot go into here, but most people will agree that freedom is essential to it—national freedom so far as the nation is concerned, personal freedom so far as the individual is concerned. For every restriction and inhibition stops growth and development and produces, apart from economic

disorders, complexes and perversions in the nation and individual. So freedom is necessary. Equally necessary is the will and the capacity for co-operation. Modern life grows so complex, there is so much interdependence, that co-operation is the very breath that keeps it functioning.

The long course of history shows us a succession of different forms of government and changing economic forms of production and organization. The two fit in and shape and influence each other. When economic change goes ahead too fast and the forms of government remain more or less static, a hiatus occurs, which is usually bridged over by a sudden change called revolution. The tremendous importance of economic events in shaping history and forms of government is almost universally admitted now.

We are often told that there is a world of difference between the East and the West. The West is said to be materialistic, the East spiritual, religious etc. What exactly the East signifies is seldom indicated, for the East includes the Bedouins of the Arabian deserts, the Hindus of India, the nomads of the Siberian steppes, the pastoral tribes of Mongolia, the typically irreligious Confucians of China, and the Samurai of Japan. There are tremendous national and cultural differences between the different countries of Asia as well as of Europe ; but there is no such thing as East and West except in the minds of those who wish to make this an excuse for imperialist domination, or those who have inherited such myths and fictions from a confused metaphysical past. Differences there are but they are chiefly due to different stages of economic growth.

We see, in north-western Europe, autocracy and feudalism giving place to the present capitalist order involving competition and large scale production. The old small holdings disappear ; the feudal checks on the serfs and cultivators go, and these agriculturists are also deprived of the little land they had. Large numbers of landless people are thrown out of employment and they have no land to fall back upon. A landless, propertyless proletariat is thus created. At the same time the, checks and the controlled prices of the limited market

of feudal times disappear, and the open market appears. Ultimately this leads to the world market, the characteristic feature of capitalism.

Capitalism builds up on the basis of the landless proletariat which could be employed as wage labourers in the factories and the open market, where the machine-made goods could be sold. It grows rapidly and spreads all over the world. In the producing countries it was an active and living capitalism ; in the colonial and consuming countries it was just a passive consumption of the goods made by machine industry in the West. North-western Europe, and a little later, North America, exploit the resources of the world ; they exploit Asia, Africa, East Europe and South America. They add vastly to the wealth of the world but this wealth is largely concentrated in a few nations and a few hands.

In this growth of capitalism, dominion over India was of vital importance to England. India's gold, in the early stages, helped in the further industrialization of England. And then India became a great producer of raw materials to feed the factories of England and a huge market to consume the goods made in these factories. England, in her passionate desire to accumulate wealth, sacrificed her agriculture to her industry. England became almost a kind of vast city and India the rural area attached to her.

The concentration of wealth in fewer hands went on. But the exploitation of India and other countries brought so much wealth to England that some of it trickled down to the working class and their standards of living rose. Working class agitations were controlled and soothed by concessions from the capitalist owners, which they could well afford from the profits of imperialist exploitation. Wages rose ; hours of work went down ; there were insurance and other welfare schemes for the workers. A general prosperity in England took the edge off working class discontent.

In India, passive industrialization meant an ever growing burden on land. She became just a consumer of foreign

machine-made goods. Her own cottage industries were partly destroyed forcibly, and partly by economic forces, and nothing took their place. All the ingredients and conditions for industrialization were present, but England did not encourage this, and indeed tried to prevent it by taxing machinery. And so the burden on the land grew and with it unemployment and poverty, and there was a progressive ruralization of India.

But the process of history and economics cannot be stopped for long. Although general poverty was increasing, small groups accumulated some capital and wanted fields for investment. And so machine industry grew in India, partly with Indian capital, very much more so with foreign capital. Indian capital was largely dependent on foreign capital and, in particular, could be controlled by the foreign banking system. It is well-known that the World War gave a great push to Indian industry and afterwards, for reasons of imperial policy, England changed her policy towards Indian industry and began to encourage it, but mostly with foreign capital. The growth of so-called *swadeshi* industries in India thus represented, to a very great extent, the increasing hold of British capital on India.

The growth of industries and nationalist movements in all the countries of the East checked Western exploitation and the profits of Western capitalism began to go down. War debts and other consequences of the war were a tremendous burden for all the countries concerned. There was not so much money or profits of industry to be distributed to the working class in the West, and the discontent and pressure of the workers grew. There was also the living incentive and inspiration of the Russian Revolution for the workers

Meanwhile two other processes were working silently but with great rapidity. One was the concentration of wealth and industrial power in fewer hands by the formation of huge trusts, cartels, and combines. The other was a continuous improvement in technique in the methods of production, leading to greater mechanization, far greater production, and more unemployment as workers were replaced by machinery. And

this led to a curious result. Just when industry was producing goods on the biggest mass scale in history, there were few people to buy them as the great majority were too poor to be able to afford them. Tl e armies of the unemployed were not earning anything, so how could they spend ? And even the majority of those earning had little to spare. A new truth suddenly dawned on the perplexed minds of the great captains of industry (this dawning process has not yet taken place among the leaders of industry in India), and the truth was this : that mass production necessitates mass consumption. But if the masses have no money how are they to buy or consume ? And what of production then ? So production is stopped or restricted and the wheels of industry slow down till they barely move. Unemployment grows all the more and this again makes consumption diminish.

This is the crisis of capitalism which has had the world by the throat for over four years. Essentially it is due to the ill-distribution of the world's wealth, to its concentration in a few hands. And the disease seems to be of the essence of capitalism and grows with it till it eats and destroys the very system which created it. There is no lack of money in the world, no lack of foodstuffs, or the many other things that man requires. The world is richer today than it has ever been and holds promise of untold advance in the near future. And yet the system breaks down and while millions starve and endure privation, huge quantities of foodstuffs and other articles are destroyed, insect pests are let loose on the fields to destroy crops, harvests are not gathered, and nations meet together to confer how to restrict future crops of wheat and cotton and tea and coffee and so many other articles. From the beginning of history man has sought with nature to get the barest necessities of life, and now that nature's wealth is poured out before him, enough to remove poverty forever from the world, his only way of dealing with it is to burn and destroy it, and become poorer and more destitute in the process.

History has never offered a more amazing paradox. It seems clear enough that the capitalist system of industry, whatever its services in the past may have been, is no longer suited

to the present methods of production. Technical advance has gone far ahead of the existing social structure and, as in the past, this hiatus causes most of our present-day disorders. Till that lag is made up and a new system in keeping with the new technique is adopted, the disorders are likely to continue. The change-over to the new system is of course opposed by those who have vested interests in the old system and though this old system is dying before their eyes, they prefer to hold on to their little rather than share a lot with others.

It is not, fundamentally, a moral issue, as some people imagine, although there is a moral side to it. It is not a question of blaming capitalism or cursing capitalists and the like. Capitalism has been of the greatest service to the world and individual capitalists are but tiny wheels in the big machine. The question now is whether the capitalist system has not outlived its day and must now give place to a better and a saner ordering of human affairs, which is more in keeping with the progress of science and human knowledge.

In India, during this period, the tremendous burden on land continued and even increased, despite the growth of industry in certain areas. Economic discontent increased. The middle classes grew up, and finding no sufficient scope for self-development, demanded political changes and took to agitation. More or less similar causes worked all over the colonial and dependent East. Especially after the war, national movements grew rapidly in Egypt and most of the countries of Asia. These movements were essentially due to the distress of the masses and the lower middle classes. There was a strange similarity even in the methods employed by these movements—non-cooperation, boycotts of legislatures, boycotts of goods, hartals, strikes, etc. Occasionally there were violent outbreaks, as in Egypt and Syria, but stress was laid far more on peaceful methods. In India, of course, non-violence was made a basic principle by the Congress at the suggestion of Gandhiji. All these national struggles for freedom have continued till now and they are bound to continue till a solution of the basic problem is found. Fundamentally, this solution is not merely a question of satisfying the natural desire for self-rule but one of filling hungry stomachs.

The great revolutionary nationalist urge in Asia of the after-war years gradually exhausted itself for the time being and conditions stabilized themselves. In India this took the form of the Swarajist entry into the Assembly and the Councils. In Europe also the middle nineteen-twenties was a period of settling down and adaptation to the new conditions created by the World War. The revolution that had hovered all over Europe in 19.9 and 1920 failed to come off and receded into the background. American gold poured into Europe and revived to some extent the war-weary and disillusioned peoples of that continent and created a false appearance of prosperity. But this prosperity had no real basis and the crash came in 1929 when the United States of America stopped lending money to Europe and South America. Many factors, and especially the inherent conflicts of a declining capitalism, contributed to this crash, and the house of cards of after-war capitalist prosperity began to tumble down. That process of tumbling down has been going on at a tremendous pace for four years and there is no end to it yet. It is called the slump, trade depression, the crisis, etc., but it is really the evening of the capitalist system and the world is being compelled by circumstances to recognize this. International co-operation has failed, the world market which was the essential basis of capitalism is disappearing, and each nation is trying frantically to shift for itself at the cost of others. Whatever the future may bring, one thing is certain : that the old order has gone and all the king's horses and all the king's men will not set it up again.

As the old capitalist order has tottered, the challenge to it by the growing forces of labour has grown more intense. This challenge, when it has become dangerous, has induced the possessing classes to sink their petty differences and band themselves together to fight the common foe. This had led to fascism and, in its milder forms, to the formation of so-called national governments. Essentially, these are the last ditch efforts of the possessing classes, or the 'kept classes' as they have been called by an American economist, to hold on to what they have. The struggle becomes more intense and the forms of nineteenth century democracy are discarded. But fascism or national governments offer no solution to the funda-

mental economic inconsistencies of the present-day capitalist system and so long as they do not remove the inequalities of wealth and solve the problem of distribution, they are doomed to fail. Of the major capitalist countries the United States of America is the only place where some attempt is being made today towards lessening, to a slight extent, inequalities of wealth by state action. Carried to a logical conclusion, President Roosevelt's programme will lead to a form of state socialism ; it is far more likely that the effort will fail and result in fascism. England, as is her habit, is grimly muddling through and waiting for something to happen. Meanwhile she has derived considerable help from India's gold resources. But all this is temporary relief only and the nations slide downhill and approach the brink.

Thus, if we survey the world today, we find that capitalism, having solved the problem of production, helplessly faces the allied problem of distribution and is unable to solve it. It was not in the nature of the capitalist system to deal satisfactorily with distribution, and production alone makes the world top-heavy and unbalanced. To find a solution for distributing wealth and purchasing power evenly is to put an end to the basic inequalities of the capitalist system and to replace capitalism itself by a more scientific system.

Capitalism has led to imperialism and to the conflicts of imperialist. Powers in search for colonial areas for exploitation, for areas of raw produce and for markets for manufactured goods. It has led to ever increasing conflicts with the rising nationalism of colonial countries, and to social conflicts with powerful movements of the exploited working class. It has resulted in recurrent crises, political and economic, leading to economic and tariff wars as well as political wars on an enormous scale. Every subsequent crisis is on a bigger scale than the previous one, and now we live in a perpetual state of crisis and slump and the shadow of war darkens the horizon.

And yet it is well to remember that the world today has a surfeit of food and the other good things of life. Terrible want

exists because the present system does not know how to distribute them. Repeated international conferences have failed to find a way out because they represented the interes s of vested interests and dared not touch the system itself. They grope blindly in the dark in their stuffy rooms while the foundations of the house they built are being sapped by the advance of science and economic events. Everywhere thinkers have recognized the utter inadequacy of the existing system, though they have differed as to the remedies. Communists and socialists point with confidence to the way of socialism and they are an ever growing power for they have science and logic on their side. In America a great stir was caused recently by the technocrats, a group of engineers who want to do away with money itself and to substitute for it a unit of energy, an erg. In England the social credit theories of Major Douglas, according to which the whole production of the nation will be evenly distributed to the whole population—a kind of 'dividends for all'—find increasing acceptance. Barter takes the place of trade both in the domestic and the international market. The growth of these revolutionary theories even among the well-to-do classes, and especially the intellectuals, is in itself and indication of the tremendous change in the mentality that is taking place in the world. How many of us can conceive a world without money and with the invisible erg as its measure of value ? And yet this is soberly and earnestly advocated not by wild agitators but by well-known economists and engineers.

This is the world background.

The Asiatic background is intimately related to this and yet it has its peculiar features. Asia is the main field of conflict between nationalism and imperialism. Asia is still undeveloped as compared to Europe and North America. It has a vast population which can consume goods if they had the necessary purchasing power to do so. To the hard pressed imperialist Powers seeking frantically for areas of economic expansion, Asia still offers a field, though nationalisms offer many obstructions. Hence the talk of a 'push to Asia' to find an outlet for the surplus goods of the West and thus stabilize Western capitalism for another period. Capitalism is a young and growing

force in the East; it has not, as in India, wholly overthrown feudalism yet. But even before capitalism had established itself, other forces, inimical to it, have risen to challenge it. And it is obvious that if capitalism collapses in Europe and America it cannot survive in Asia.

Nationalism is still the strongest force in Asia (we can ignore for our present purpose the Soviet territories of Asia). This is natural as a country under alien domination must inevitably think first in terms of nationalism. But the powerful economic forces working for change in the world today have influenced this nationalism to an ever increasing extent and everywhere it is appearing in socialist garb. Gradually the nationalist struggle for political freedom is becoming a social struggle also for economic freedom. Independence and the socialist state become the objectives, with varying degrees of stress being laid on the two aspects of the problem. As political freedom is delayed, the other aspect assumes greater importance, and it now seems probable, especially because of world conditions, that political and social emancipation will come together to some at least of the countries of Asia.

This is the Asiatic background.

In India, as in other Asiatic colonial countries, we find a struggle today between the old nationalist ideology and the new economic ideology. Most of us have grown up under the nationalist tradition and it is hard to give up the mental habits of a lifetime. And yet we realize that the outlook is inadequate, it does not fit in with existing conditions of our country or in the world; there is a hiatus, a lag. We try to bridge this hiatus but the process of crossing over to a new ideology is always a painful one. Many of us are confused and perplexed today because of this. But the crossing has to be made, unless we are to remain in a stagnant backwater, overwhelmed from time to time by the wash of the boats that move down the river of progress. We must realize that the nineteenth century cannot solve the problems of the twentieth, much less can the seventh century or earlier ages do so.

Having glanced at the general background of Asia and the world we can have a clearer view of our own national problem.

India's freedom affects each one of us intimately and we are apt to look upon it as a thing apart and unconnected with world events. But the Indian problem is a part of the Asiatic problem and is tied up with the problems of the world. We cannot, even if we will it, separate it from the rest. What happens in India will affect the world and world events will change India's future. Indeed it may be said that the three great world problems today are : the fate of capitalism, which means the fate of Europe and America, the future of India, and the future of China, and all these are interrelated.

India's struggle today is part of the great struggle which is going on all over the world for the emancipation of the oppressed. Essentially, this is an economic struggle, with hunger and want as its driving forces, although it puts on nationalist and other dresses.

Indian freedom is necessary because the burden on the Indian masses as well as the middle classes is too heavy to be borne and must be lightened or done away with. The measure of freedom is the extent to which this burden is removed. This burden is due to the vested interests of a foreign government as well as those of certain groups and classes in India and abroad. The achievement of freedom thus becomes a question, as Gandhiji said recently, of divesting vested interests. If an indigenous government took the place of foreign government and kept all the vested interests intact, this would not even be the shadow of freedom.

We have got into an extraordinary habit of thinking of freedom in terms of paper constitutions. Nothing could be more absurd than this lawyer's mentality which ignores life and the vital economic issues and can only proceed on the basis of the *status quo* and precedents. Too much reliance on past practice has somehow succeeded in twisting the lawyer's head backwards and he seems to be incapable of looking ahead. Even the halt and the lame go slowly forward ; not so the lawyer who is convinced, like the fanatic in religion, that truth can only lie in the past.

The Round Table scheme is almost as dead as Queen Anne and hardly deserves notice. It was not meant to give an iota of freedom to the Indian people ; it sought to win over certain Indian vested interesrs to the British side and in this it succeeded. It answered, to the satisfaction of its votaries, the question I had formulated at the beginning of this essay : whose freedom are we striving for ? It gave greater protection and assurance and freedom to the British vested interests in India. It was Home Rule for the Viceroy as Mr Vithalbhai Patel said. It confirmed the interests of British capital and British services and, in some cases, gave them even more than they have now. It tried to perpetuate the alien military occupation of India. Further, it gave greater freedom and importance to the vested interests of the princes and the semi-feudal magnates. In brief, the whole scheme was meant for the protection and perpetuation of the numerous vested interests that exploit the Indian masses. Having done this useful and, to themselves, profitable piece of work, the originators of the scheme told us that autonomy was a costly affair and would mean the expenditure of many millions for each province ! Thus not only were all the old burdens on the masses to be continued but many new ones were to be added. This was the ingenious solution discovered by the wise and learned men who foregathered at the Round Table Conference. Intent on protecting their class privileges they happened to forget an old three hundred and fifty million people in India.

Even a child in politics can point out the folly of this procedure. The whole basis and urge of the national movement came from a desire for economic betterment, to throw off the burdens that crushed the masses and to end the exploitation of the Indian people. If these burdens continue and are actually added to, it does not require a powerful mind to realize that the fight must not only continue but grow more intense. Leaders and individuals may come and go ; and they may get tired and slacken off ; they may compromise or betray ; but the exploited and suffering masses must carry on the struggle for their drill-sergent is hunger. Swaraj or freedom from exploitation for them is not a fine paper constitution or a problem of

the hereafter. It is a question of the here and now, of immediate relief. Roast lamb and mint sauce may be a tasty dish for those who eat it but the poor lamb is not likely to appreciate the force of the best of arguments which point out the beauty to sacrifice for the good of the elect and the joys of close communion, even though dead, with mint sauce.

India's immediate goal can therefore only be considered in terms of the ending of exploitation of her people. Politically, it must mean independence and the severance of the British connection, which means imperialist dominion; economically and socially it must mean the ending of all special class privileges and vested interests. The whole world is struggling to this end; India can do no less, and in this way the Indian struggle for freedom lines up with world struggle. Is our aim human welfare or the preservation of class privileges and the vested interests of pampered groups? The question must be answered clearly and unequivocally by each one of us. There is no room for quibbling when the fate of nations and millions of human beings is at stake. The day for palace intrigues and parlour politics and pacts and compromises passes when the masses enter politics. Their manners are not those of the drawing room; we never took the trouble to teach them any manners. Their school is the school of events and suffering is their teacher. They learn their politics from great movements which bring out the true nature of individuals and classes, and the civil disobedience movement has taught the Indian masses many a lesson which they will never forget.

Independence is a much abused word and it hardly connotes what we are driving at. And yet there is no other suitable word and, for want of a better, we must use it. National isolation is neither a desirable nor a possible idea in a world which is daily becoming more of a unit. International and intranational activities dominate the world and nations are growing more and more interdependent. Our ideal and objective cannot go against this historical tendency and we must be prepared to discard a narrow nationalism in favour of world co-operation and real internationalism. Independence therefore cannot mean for us isolation but freedom from all imperialist control,

and because Britain today represents imperialism, our freedom can only come after the British connection is severed. We have no quarrel with the British people, but between British imperialism and Indian freedom there is no meeting ground and there can be no peace. If imperialism goes from Britain we shall gladly co-operate with her in the wider international field ; not otherwise.

British statesmen of the Liberal and Labour variety often point out to us the ills of a narrow nationalism and dwell on the virtues of what used to be known as the British Empire and is now euphemistically call the British Commonwealth of Nations. Under cover of fine and radical words and phrases they seek to hide the ugly and brutal face of imperialism and try to keep us in its embrace of death. Some Indian public men, who ought to know better, also praise the virtues of internationalism, meaning thereby the British Empire, and tell us in sorrow how narrow-minded we are in demanding independence, in place of that wonderful thing (which nobody offers us) Dominion Status. The British, it is well known, have a remarkable capacity for combining their moral instincts with their self-interest. This is perhaps not unnatural, but it is remarkable how some of our own countrymen are taken in by this unctuous and hypocritical attitude. Even the light of day is wasted on those who keep their eyes shut. It is worth noting however that the foreign policy of England has been the greatest stumbling block to international co-operation through the League of Nations or otherwise. All the European and American world knows this but most of us, who look at foreign politics through English spectacles, have not grasped this fact yet. Disarmament, air-bombing, the attitude to the Manchurian question, are some of the recent witnesses to England's attitude. Even the Kellogg-Briand Pact of Paris, which was to have outlawed war, was only accepted by England subject to certain qualifications and reservations regarding her empire, which effectively nullified the pact. The British Empire and real internationalism are as the poles apart and it is not through that empire that we can march to internationalism.

The real question before us, and before the whole world, is one of the fundamental change of regime, politically, economi-

cally, socially. Only thus can we put India on the road to progress and stop the progressive deterioration of our country. In a revolutionary period, such as exists in the world today, it is foolish waste of energy to think and act in terms of carrying on the existing regime and trying to reform it and improve it. To do so is to waste the opoortunity which history offers once in a long while. 'The whole world is in revolution' says Mussolini. 'Events themselves are a tremendous force pushing us on like some implacable will.' Individuals, however eminent, play but a minor role when the world is on the move. They may divert the main current here and there to some slight extent ; they may not and cannot stop the rushing torrent. And therefore the only peace that can endure is with circumstances, not merely with men.

Whither India ? Surely to the great human goal of social and economic equality, to the ending of all exploitation of nation by nation and class by class, to national freedom within the framework of an international co-operative socialist world federation. This is not such an empty idealist dream as some people imagine. It is within the range of the practical politics of today and the near future. We may not have it within our grasp but those with vision can see it emerging on the horizon. And even if there be delay in the realization of our goal, what does it matter if our steps march in the right direction and our eyes look steadily in front. For in the pursuit itself of a mighty purpose there is joy and happiness and a measure of achievement. As Bernard Shaw has said : 'This is the true joy in life, the being used for a purpose recognized by yourself as a mighty one ; the being thoroughly worn out before you are thrown on the scrap heap ; the being a force of nature, instead of a feverish, selfish little clod of ailments and grievances, complaining that the world will not devote itself to making you happy."

CONSOLIDATION OF BRITISH RULE AND RISE OF NATIONALIST MOVEMENT*

The Ideology of Empire : The New Caste

'Our writing of India's history is perhaps resented than anything else we have done'—so writes an Englishman

*From Nehru's *The Discovery of India*, Chapter 7.

well acquainted with India and her history. It is difficult to say what Indians have resented most in the record of British rule in India; the list is long and varied. But it is true that British accounts of India's history, more especially of what is called the British period, are bitterly resented. History is almost always written by the victors and conquerors and gives their viewpoint; or, at any rate, the victors' version is given prominence and holds the field. Very probably all the early records we have of the Aryans in India, their epics and traditions, glorify the Aryans and are unfair to the people of the country whom they subdued. No individual can wholly rid himself of his racial outlook and cultural limitations, and when there is conflict between races and countries even an attempt at impartiality is considered a betrayal of one's own people. War, which is an extreme example of this conflict, results in a deliberate throwing overboard of all fairness and impartiality so far as the enemy nation is concerned; the mind coarsens and becomes closed to almost all avenues of approach except one. The overpowering need of the moment is to justify one's own action and condemn and blacken those of the enemy. Truth hides somewhere at the bottom of the deepest well and falsehood, naked and unashamed, reigns almost supreme.

Even when actual war is not being waged there is often potential war and conflicts between rival countries and interests. In a country dominated by an alien power that conflict is inherent and continuous and affects and perverts people's thoughts and actions; the war mentality is never wholly absent. In the old days when war and its consequences, brutality and conquest and enslavement of a people, were accepted as belonging to the natural order of events, there was no particular need to cover them or justify them from, some other point of view. With the growth of higher standards the need for justification has arisen, and this leads to a perversion of facts, sometimes deliberate, often unconscious. Thus hypocrisy pays its tribute to virtue, and a false and sickening piety allies itself to evil deeds.

In any country, and especially in a huge country like India with its complicated history and mixed culture, it is always possible to find facts and trends to justify a particular thesis, and then this becomes the accepted basis for a new argument. America, it is said, is a land of contradictions, in spite of its standardization and uniformity. How much more then must India be full of contradictions and incongruities. We shall find there, as elsewhere, what we seek, and on this preconceived basis we can build up a structure of belief and opinion. And yet that structure will have untrue foundations and will give a false picture of reality.

Recent Indian history, that is the history of the British period, is so connected with present-day happenings that the passions and prejudices of today powerfully influence our interpretation of it. Englishmen and Indians are both likely to err, though their errors will lie in opposite directions. For the greater part of the records and papers out of which history takes shape and is written comes form British sources and indevitably represents the British point of view. The very circumstances of defeat and disruption prevented the Indian side of the story from being properly recorded, and many of the records that existed suffered destruction during the great Revolt of 1857. The papers that survived were hidden away in family archives and could not be published for fear of consequences. They remained dispersed, little known, and many perished in the manuscript stage from the incursion of termites and other insects which abound in the country. At a later stage when some of these papers were discovered they threw a new light on many historical incidents. Even British-written Indian history had to be somewhat modified, and the Indian conception, often very different from the British, took shape. Behind this conception lay also a mass of tradition and memories, not of the remote past but of a period when our grandfathers and great-grandfathers were the living witnesses and often the victims of events. As history this tradition may have little value, but it is important as it enables us to understand the background of the Indian mind to-day. The villain of the British in India is often a hero to Indians, and those whom the British have delighted to honour and

reward are often traitors and quislings in the eyes of the great majority of the Indian people. That taint clings to their descendants.

The history of the American Revolution has been differently written by Englishmen and Americans, and even to-day when old passions have subsided and there is friendship between the two peoples, each version is resented by the other party. In our own day Lenin was a monster and a brigand to many English statesmen of high repute, yet millions have considered him as saviour and the greatest man of the age. These comparisons will give us some faint idea of the resentment felt by Indians at being forced to study in their schools and colleges so-called histories which disparage India's past in every way, vilify those whose memory they cherish, and honour and glorify the achievements of British rule in India.

Gopal Krishna Gokhale once wrote in his gently ironical way of the inscrutable wisdom of Providence which had ordained the British connection for India. Whether it was due to this inscrutable wisdom or to some process of historic destiny or just chance, the coming of the British to India brought two very different races together ; or, at any rate, it should have brought them together, but as it happened they seldom approached each other and their cantacts were indirect. English literature and English political thought influenced a tiny fringe of those who had learned English. But this political thought, though dynamic in its context, had no reality in India then. The British who came to India were not political or social revolutionaries ; they were conservatives representing the most reactionary social class in England, and England was in some ways one of the most conservative countries in Europe.

The impact of western culture on India was the impact of a dynamic society, of a 'modern' consciousness, on a static society wedded to medieval habits of thought which, however sophisticated and advanced in its own way could not progress because of its inherent limitations. And yet, curiously enough the agents of this historic process were not only wholly uncon-

scious of their missiou in India but, as a class, actually represented no such process. In England their class fought this historic process but the forces opposed to them were too strong and could not be held back. In India they had a free field and were successful in applying the brakes to that very change and progress which, in the larger context they represented. They encouraged and consolidated the position of the socially reactionary groups in India. and opposed all those who worked for political and social change. If change came, it was in spite of them or as a acidental and unexpected consequence of their activities. The introduction of the steam engine and the railway was a big step towards a change of the medieval structure, but it was intended to consolidate their rule and facilitate the exploitation for their own benefit of the interior of the country. This contradiction between the deliberate policy of the Btitish authorities in India and some of its unintended consequences produces a certain confusion and masks that policy itself. Change came to India because of this impact of the west, but it came almost in spite of the British in India. They succeeded in slowing down the pace of that change to such an extent that even to-day the transition is very far from complete.

The feudal landlords and their kind who came from England to rule over India had the landlord's view of the world. To them India was a vast estate belonging to the East India Company, and the landlord was the best and the natural representative of his estate and his tenants. That view continued even after the East India Company handed over its estate of India to the British Crown, being paid very handsome compensation at India's cost. (Thus began the public debt of India. It was India's purchase money, paid by India). The British Government of India then became the landlords (or landlords' agents). For all practical purposes they considered themselves 'India', just as the Duke of Devonshire might be considered 'Devonshire' by his peers. The millions of people who lived and functioned in India were just some kind of landlord's tenants who had to pay their rents and cesses and to keep their place in the natural feudal order.

For them a challenge to that order was an offence against the very moral basis of the universe and a denial of a divine dispensation.

This somewhat metaphysical conception of British rule in India has not changed fundamentally, though it is expressed differently now. The old method of obvious rack-renting gave place to more subtle and devious devices. It was admitted that the landlord should be benevolent towards his tenantry and should seek to advance their interests. It was even agreed that some of the more loyal and faithful among the tenants should be promoted to the estate office and share in a subordinate way in the administration. But no challenge to the system of landlordism could be tolerated. The estate must continue to function as it used to even when it changed hands. When pressure of events made some such change inevitable, it was stipulated that all the faithful employees in the estate office should continue, all the old and new friends, followers and dependants of the landlord should be provided for, the old age pensioners should continue to draw their pensions, the old landlord himself should now function as a benevolent patron and adviser of the estate, and thus all attempts to bring about essential changes should be frustrated.

This sense of identifying India with their own interests was strongest in the higher administrative services, which were entirely British. In later years these developed in that close and well-knit corporation called the Indian Civil Service—'the world's most tenacious trade union,' as it has been called by an English writer. They ran India, they were India, and anything that was harmful to their interests must of necessity be injurious to India. From the Indian Civil Service and the kind of history and record of current events that was placed before them, this conception spread in varying degrees to the different strata of the British people. The ruling class naturally shared it in full measure, but even the worker and the farmer were influenced by it to some slight extent, and felt, in spite of their own subordinate position in their own country, the pride of possession and empire. That same worker or farmer if he came to India inevitably belonged to the ruling

class here. He was totally ignorant of India's history and culture and he accepted the prevailing ideology of the British in India, for he had no other standards to judge by or apply. At the most a vague benevolence filled him, but that was strictly conditioned within that framework. For a hundred years this ideology permeated all sections of the British people, and became, as it were, a national heritage, a fixed and almost unalterable notion, which governed their outlook on India and imperceptibly affected even their domestic outlook. In our own day that curious group which has no fixed standards or principles or much knowledge of the outside world, the leaders of the British Labour Party, have usually been the staunchest supporters of the existing order in India. Sometimes a vague sense of uneasiness fills them at a seeming contradiction between their domestic and colonial policy, between their professions and practice, but, considering themselves above all as practical men of commonsense, they sternly repress all these stirrings of conscience. Practical men must necessarily base themselves on established and known practice, on existing conditions, and not take a leap into the dark unknown merely because of some principle or untested theory.

Viceroys who come to India direct from England have to fit in with and rely upon the Indian Civil Service structure. Belonging to the possessing and ruling class in England, they have no difficulty whatever in accepting the prevailing I.C.S. outlook, and their unique position of absolute authority, unparalleled elsewhere, leads to subtle changes in their ways and methods of expression. Authority corrupts and absolute authority corrupts absolutely, and no man in the wide world to-day has had or has such absolute authority over such large numbers of people as the British Viceroy of India. The Viceroy speaks in a manner such as no Prime Minister of England or President of the United States can adopt. The only possible parallel would be that of Hitler. And not the Viceroy only, but the British members of his Council, the Governors, and even the smaller fry who function as secretaries of departments or magistrates. They speak from a noble and unattainable height, secure not only in the convic-

tion that what they say and do is right, but that it will have to be accepted as right whatever lesser mortals may imagine, for theirs is the power and the glory.

Some members of the Viceroy's Council are appointed direct from England and do not belong to the Indian Civil Service. There is usually a marked difference in their ways and utterances from those of the Civil Service. They function easily enough in that framework, but they cannot quite develop that superior and self-satisfied air of assured authority. Much less can the Indian members of the Council (a fairly recent addition), who are obvious supers, whatever their numbers or intelligence. Indians belonging to the Civil Service, whatever their rank in the official hierarchy, do not belong to the charmed circle. A few of them try to ape the manners of their colleagues without much success; they become rather pompous and ridiculous.

The new generation of British members of the Indian Civil Service are, I believe, somewhat different in mind and texture from their predecessors. They do not easily fit into the old framework, but all authority and policy flow from the senior members and the newcomers make no difference. They have either to accept the established order or, as has sometimes happened, resign and return to their homeland.

I remember that when I was a boy the British-owned newspapers in India were full of official news and utterances; of service news, transfers and promotions: of the doings of English society. of polo, races, dances, and amateur theatricals. There was hardly a word about the people of India, about their political, cultural, social, or economic life. Reading them one would hardly suspect that they existed.

In Bombay there used to be quadrangular cricket matches between four elevens made up respectively of Hindus, Moslems Parsees, and Europeans. The European eleven was called Bombay Presidency: the others were just Hindus, Moslems, Parsees. Bombay was thus essentially represented by the Europeans; the others, one would imagine, were foreign elements

who were recognized for this purpose. These quadrangular matches still take place, though there is much argument about them, and a demand that elevens should not be chosen on religious lines. I believe that the 'Bombay Presidency' team is now called 'European'.

English clubs in India usually have territorial names—the Bengal Club, the Allahabad Club, etc. They are confined to Britishers, or rather to Europeans. There need be no objection to territorial designation, or even to a group of persons having a club for themselves and not approving of outsiders joining it. But this designation is derived from the old British habit of considering that they are the real India that counts, the real Bengal, the real Allahabad. Others are just excrescences, useful in their own way if they know their places, but otherwise a nuisance. The exclusion of non-Europeans is far more a racial affair than a justifiable means for people with cultural affinities to meet together in their leisure moments for play and social intercourse, without the intrusion of other elements. For my part I have no objection to exclusive English or European clubs, and very few Indians would care to join them ; but when this social exclusiveness is clearly based on racialism and on a ruling class always exhibiting its superiority and unapproachability, it bears another aspect. In Bombay there is a well-known club which did not allow and so far as I know does not allow, an Indian (except as a servant) even in its visitors' room, even though he might be a ruling prince or a captain of industry.

Racialism in India is not so much English versus Indian ; it is European as opposed to Asiatic. In India every European, be he German, or Pole, or Rumanian, is automatically a member of the ruling race. Railway carriages, station retiring-rooms, benches in parks, etc., are marked "For Europeans Only.' This is bad enough in South Africa or elsewhere, but to have to put up with it in one's own country is a humiliating and exasperating reminder of one's enslaved condition.

It is true that a gradual change has been taking place in these external manifestations of racial superiority and imperial

arrogance, but the process is slow and frequent instances occur to show how superficial it is. Political pressure and the rise of a militant nationalism enforce change and lead to a deliberate attempt to tone down the former racialism and aggressiveness; and yet that very political movement, when it reaches a stage of crisis and is sought to be crushed, leads to a resurgence of all the old imperialist and racial arrogance in its extremest form.

The English are a sensitive people, and yet when they go to foreign countries there is a strange lack of awareness about them. In India, where the relation of ruler and ruled makes mutual understanding difficult, this lack of awareness is peculiarly evident. Almost one would think that it is deliberate, so that they may see only what they want to see and be blind to all else; but facts do not vanish because they are ignored, and when they compel attention there is a feeling of displeasure and resentment at the unexpected happening, as of some trick having been played.

In this land of caste the British, and more especially the Indian Civil Service, have built up a caste which is rigid and exclusive. Even the Indian members of the service do not really belong to that caste, though they wear the insignia and conform to its rules. That caste has developed something in the nature of a religious faith in its own paramount importance, and round that faith has grown an appropriate mythology which helps to maintain it. A combination of faith and vested interests is a powerful one, and any challenge to it arouses the deepest passions and fierce indignation.

The Techniques of British Rule : Balance and Counterpoise

The Revolt of 1857-58 was essentially a feudal rising, though there were some nationalistic elements in it. Yet, at the same time, it was due to the abstention or active help of the princes and other feudal chiefs that the British succeeded in crushing it. Those who had joined the Revolt were as a rule the disinherited and those deprived of their power and privileges by the British authority, or those who feared that

some such fate was in store for them. British policy after some hesitation had decided in favour of a gradual elimination of the princes and the establishment of direct British rule. The Revolt brought about a change in this policy in favour not only of the princes but of the taluqdars or big landlords. It was felt that it was easier to control the masses through these feudal or semi-feudal chiefs. These taluqdars of Oudh had been the tax-farmers of the Mughals but, owing to the weakness of the central authority, they had begun to function as feudal landlords. Nearly all of them joined the Revolt, though some took care to keep a way of escape open. In spite of their rebellion the British authority offered to reinstate them (with a few exceptions) and confirm them in their estates on conditions of 'loyalty and good service.' Thus these taluqdars, who take pride in calling themselves the 'Barons of Oudh,' became one of the pillars of British rule.

Though the Revolt had directly affected only certain parts of the country it had shaken up the whole of India and, particularly, the British administration. The Government set about reorganizing their entire system ; the British Crown, that is the Parliament, took over the country from the East India Company ; the Indian army, which had begun the Revolt by its mutiny, was organized afresh. The techniques of British rule, which had already been well-established, were now clarified and confirmed and deliberately acted upon. Essentially these were : the creation and protection of vested interests bound up with British rule ; a policy of balancing and counterpoise of different elements, and the encouragement of fissiparous tendencies and division amongst them.

The princes and the big landlords were the basic vested interests thus created and encouraged ; but now a new class, even more tied up with British rule, grew in importance. This consisted of the Indian members of the services, usually in subordinate positions. Previously the employment of Indians had been avoided except when this could not be helped, and Munro had pleaded for such employment. Experience had now demonstrated that Indians employed were so dependent on the British administration and rule that they could be relied upon

and treated as agents of that rule. In the pre-mutiny days most of the Indian members of the subordinate services had been Bengalis. These had spread out over the upper provinces wherever the British administration needed clerks and the like in its civil or military establishments. Regular colonies of Bengalis had thus grown up at the administrative or military centres in the United Provinces, Delhi, and even in the Punjab. These Bengalis accompanied the British armies and proved faithful employees to them. They became associated in the minds of the rebels with the British power and were greatly disliked by them and given uncomplimentary titles.

Thus began the process of the Indianization of the administrative machine in its subordinate ranks, all real power and initiative being, however, concentrated in the hands of the English personnel. As English education spread, the Bengalis had no longer a virtual monopoly of service and other Indians came in, both on the judicial and executive sides of the administration. This Indianization became the most effective method of strengthening British rule. It created a civil army and garrison everywhere, which was more important even than the military army of occupation. There were some members of this civil army who were able and patriotic and nationalistically inclined, but like the soldier, who also may be patriotic in his individual capacity, they were bound up by the army code and discipline and the price of disobedience, desertion, and revolt was heavy. Not only was this civil army created but the hope and prospect of employment in it affected and demoralized a vast and growing number of others. There was a measure of prestige and security in it and a pension at the end of the term of service, and if a sufficient subservience was shown to one's superior officers, other failings did not count. These civil employees were the intermediaries between the British authorities and the people, and if they had to be obsequious to their superiors they could be arrogant to and exact obedience from their own inferiors and the people at large.

The lack of other avenues of employment, other ways of making a living, added additional importance to government service. A few could become lawyers or doctors, but even so,

success was by no means assured. Industry hardly existed. Trade was largely in the hands of certain hereditary classes who had a peculiar aptitude for it and who helped each other. The new education did not fit anyone for trade or industry; its chief aim was government service. Education was so limited as to offer few openings for a professional career; other social services were almost non-existent. So government service remained and, as the colleges poured out their graduates, even the growing government services could not absorb them all, and a fierce competition arose. The unemployed graduates and others formed a pool from which government could always draw; they were a potential threat to the security of even the employed. Thus the British Government in India became, not only the biggest employer, but, for all practical purposes, the sole big employer (including railways), and a vast bureaucratic machine was built up, strictly managed and controlled at the top. This enormous patronage was exercised to strengthen the British hold on the country, to crush discordant and disagreeable elements, and to promote rivalry and discord amongst various groups anxiously looking forward to employment in government service. It led to demoralization and conflict, and the government could play one group against the other.

The policy of balance and counterpoise was deliberately furthered in the Indian army. Various groups were so arranged as to prevent any sentiment of national unity growing up amongst them, and tribal and communal loyalties and slogans were encouraged. Every effort was made to isolate the army from the people and even ordinary newspapers were not allowed to reach the Indian troops. All the key positions were kept in the hands of Englishmen and no Indian could hold the King's commission. A raw English subaltern was senior to the oldest and most experienced Indian non-commissioned officer or those holding the so-called Viceroy's commissions. No Indian could be employed at army headquarters except as a petty clerk in the accounts department. For additional protection the more effective weapons of warfare were not given to the Indian forces; they were reserved for the British troops in India. These British troops were always kept with the Indian

regiments in all the vital centres of India to serve as 'Internal Security Troops' for suppression of disorder and to overawe the people. While this internal army, with a predominance of British personnel, served as an army of occupation for the country, the greater portion of the Indian troops were part of the field army organized for service abroad. The Indian troops were recruited from special classes only, chiefly in northern India, which were called martial classes.

Again we notice in India that inherent contradiction in British rule. Having brought about the political unification of the country and thus let loose new dynamic forces which thought not only in terms of that unity, but aimed at the freedom of India, the British Government tried to disrupt that very unity it had helped to create. That disruption was not thought of in political terms then as a splitting up of India ; it was aimed at the weakening of nationalist elements so that British rule might continue over the whole country. But it was nonetheless an attempt at disruption, by giving greater importance to the Indian states than they had ever had before, by encouraging reactionary elements and looking to them for support, by promoting divisions and encouraging one group against another, by encouraging fissiparous tendencies due to religion or province, and by organizing quisling classes which were afraid of a change which might engulf them. All this was a natural understandable policy for a foreign imperialist power to pursue, and it is a little naive to be surprised at it, harmful from the Indian nationalist point of view though it was. But the fact that it was so must be remembered if we are to understand subsequent developments. Out of this policy arose those important elements in India's national life of which we are reminded so often today ; which were created and encouraged to disagree and disrupt, and are now called upon to agree among themselves.

Because of this natural alliance of the British power with the reactionaries in India, it became the guardian and upholder of many an evil custom and practice which it otherwise condemned. India was custom-ridden when the British came, and the tyranny of old custom is often a terrible thing. Yet customs

change and are forced to adapt themselves to some extent to a changing environment. Hindu law was largely custom, and as custom changed the law also was applied in a different ways. Indeed, there was no provision of Hindu law which could not be changed by custom. The British replaced this elastic customary law by judicial decisions based on the old texts, and these decisions became precedents which had to be rigidly followed. That was, in theory, an advantage, as it produced greater uniformity and certainty. But, in the manner it was done, it resulted in the perpetuation of the ancient law unmodified by subsequent customs. Thus the old law which, in some particulars and in various places, had been changed by custom and was thus out of date, was petrified, and every tendency to change it in the well-known customary way was suppressed. It was still open to a group to prove a custom overriding the law, but this was extraordinarily difficulty in the law courts. Change could only come by positive legislation, but the British Government, which was the legislating authority, had no wish to antagonize the conservative elements on whose support it counted. When the depressed classes who needed it most. The whole argument centred in petty appointments in the subordinate public services, and instead of raising standards all round, merit was often sacrificed.

Separate electorates thus weakened the groups that were already weak or backward, they encouraged separatist tendencies and prevented the growth of national unity, they were the negation of democracy, they created new vested interests of the most reactionary kind, they lowered standards, and they diverted attention from the real economic problems of the country which were common to all. These electorates, first introduced among the Moslems, spread to other minorities and groups till India became a mosaic of these separate compartments. Possibly they may have done some good for a little while, though I am unable to spot it, but undoubtedly the injury they have caused to every department of Indian life has been prodigious. Out of them have grown all manner of separatist tendencies and finally the demand for a splitting up of India.

Lord Morley was the Secretary of State for India when these separate electorates were introduced. He resisted them, but ultimately agreed under pressure from the Viceroy. He has pointed out in his diary the dangers inherent in such a method and how they would inevitably delay the development of representative institutions. Probably this was exactly what the Viceroy and his colleagues intended. In the Montague-Chelmsford Report on Indian Constitutional Reform (1918) the dangers of these communal electorates were again emphasized : 'Division by creeds and classes means the creation of political camps organized against each other, and teaches men to think as partisans and not as citizens...We regard any system of communal electorates, therefore, as a very serious hindrance to the development of the self-governing principle'.

NATIONALISM VERSUS IMPERIALISM*

Helplessness of the Middle Classes

Gandhi Comes

World War I came. Politics were at a low ebb, chiefly because of the split in the Congress between the two sections, the so-called extremists and the moderates, and because of wartime restrictions and regulations. Yet one tendency was marked : the rising middle class among the Moslems was growing more nationally minded and was pushing the Moslem League towards the Congress. They even joined hands.

Industry developed during the war and produced enormous dividend—100 to 20 per cent—from the jute mills of Bengal and the cotton mills of Bombay, Ahmedabad, and elsewhere. Some of these dividends flowed to the owners of foreign capital in Dundee and London, some went to swell the riches of Indian millionaires ; and yet the workers who had created these dividends lived at an incredibly low level of existence—in 'filthy, disease-ridden hovels.' with no window or chimney, no light or water supply, no sanitary arrangements. This near that so-called city of palaces. Calcutta, dominaled by British capital ! In Bombay, where Indian capital was more in evidence, an inquiry

*From Nehru's *The Discovery of India*, Chapter 8.

commission found in one room, fifteen feet by twelve, six families, in all, thirty adults and children, living together. Three of these women were expecting a confinement soon, and each family had a separate oven in that one room. These are special cases, but they are not very exceptional. They describe conditions in the 'twenties and thirties of this century when some improvements had already been made. What these conditions were like previous to these improvements staggers the imagination.*

I remember visiting some of these slums and hovels of industrial workers, gasping for breath there, and coming out dazed and full of horror and anger. I remember also going down a coal mine in Jharia and seeing the conditions in which our womenfolk worked there. I can never forget that picture or the shock that came to me that human being should labour thus. Women were subsequently prohibited from working underground, but now they have been sent back there because, we are told, war needs require additional labour : and yet millions of men are starving and unemployed. There is no lack of men, but the wages are so low and the conditions of work so bad that they do not attract.

A delegation sent by the British Trade Union Congress visited India in 1928. In their report they said that 'In Assam tea the sweat, hunger, and despair of a million Indians enter year by year.' The Director of Public Health in Bengal, in his report for 1927-28, said that the peasantry of that province were 'taking to a dietary on which even rats could not live for more than five weeks.'

World War I ended at last, and the peace, instead of bringing us relief and progress, brought us repressive legislation and martial law in the Punjab. A bitter sense of humiliation and a passionate anger filled our people. All the unending talk of constitutional reform and Indianization of the services was a mockery and an insult when the manhood of our country was

*These quotations and facts are taken from B. Shiva Rao's 'The Industrial Worker in India' (Allen and Unwin, London, 1939) which deals with labour problems and workers' conditions in India.

being crushed and the inexorable and continuous process of exploitation was deepening our poverty and sapping our vitality. We had become a derelict nation.

Yet what could we do, how change this vicious process? We seemed to be helpless in the grip of some all-powerful monster; our limbs were paralysed, our minds deadened. The peasantry were servile and fear-ridden; the industrial workers were no better. The middle classes, the intelligentsia, who might have been beacon-lights in the enveloping darkness, were themselves submerged in this all-pervading gloom. In some ways their condition was even more pitiful than that of the peasantry. Large numbers of them, *declasse* intellectuals, cut off from the land and incapable of any kind of manual or technical work, joined the swelling army of the unemployed, and helpless, hopeless, sank ever deeper into the morass. A few successful lawyers or doctors or engineers or clerks made little difference to the mass. The peasant starved, yet centuries of an unequal struggle against his environment had taught him to endure, and even in poverty and starvation he had a certain calm dignity, a feeling of submission to an all-powerful fate. Not so the middle classes, more especially the new petty *bourgeoisie*, who had no such background Incompletely developed and frustrated, they did not know where to look, for neither the old nor the new offered them any hope. These was no adjustment to social purpose, no satisfaction of doing something worthwhile, even though suffering came in its train. Custom-ridden, they were born old, yet they were without the old culture. Modern thought attracted them, but they lacked its inner content, the modern social and scientific consciousness. Some tried to cling tenaciously to the dead forms of the past, seeking relief from present misery in them. But there could be no relief there, for, as Tagore has said, we must not nourish in our being what is dead, for the dead is death-dealing. Others made themselves pale and ineffectual copies of the west. So, like derelicts, frantically seeking some foothold of security for body and mind and finding none, they floated aimlessly in the murky waters of Indian life.

What could we do? How could we pull India out of this quagmire of poverty and defeatism which sucked her in? Not

for a few years of excitement and agony and suspense, but for long generations our people had offered their 'blood and toil, tears and sweat.' And this process had eaten its way deep into the body and soil of India, poisoning every aspect of our corporate life, like that fell disease which consumes the tissues of the lungs and kills slowly but inevitably. Sometimes we thought that some swifter and more obvious process, resembling cholera or the bubonic plague, would have been better ; but that was a passing thought, for adventurism leads nowhere, and the quack treatment of deep-seated diseases does not yield results.

And then Gandhi came. He was like a powerful current of fresh air that made us stretch ourselves and take deep breaths ; like a beam of light that pierced the darkness and removed the scales from our eyes ; like a whirlwind that upset many things, but most of all the working of people's minds. He did not descend from the top ; he seemed to emerge from the millions of India, speaking their language and incessantly drawing attention to them and their appalling condition. Get off the backs of these peasants and workers, he told us, all you who live by their exploitation ; get rid of the system that produces this poverty and misery. Political freedom took new shape then and acquired a new content. Much that he said we only partially accepted or sometimes did not accept at all. But all this was secondary. The essence of his teaching was fearlessness and truth, and action allied to these, always keeping the welfare of the masses in view. The greatest gift for an individual or a nation, so we had been told in our ancient books, was *abhaya* (fear-lessness) not merely bodily courage but the absence of fear from the mind. Janaka and Yajnavalka had said, at the dawn of our history, that it was the function of the leaders of a people to make them fearless. But the dominant impulse in India under British rule was that of fear—pervasive, oppressing, strangling fear ; fear of the army, the police, the widespread secret service ; fear of the official class ; fear of laws meant to suppress and of prison ; fear of the landlord's agent ; fear of the moneylender ; fear of unemployment and starvation, which were always on the threshold. It was against this all-pervading fear that Gandhi's quiet and determined voice was raised :

Be not afraid. Was it so simple as all that ? Not quite. And yet fear builds its phantoms which are more fearsome than reality itself, and reality, when calmly analysed and its consequences willingly accepted, loses much of its terror.

So, suddenly, as it were, that black pall of fear was lifted from the people's shoulders, not wholly of course, but to an amazing degree. As fear is close companion to falsehood, so truth follows fearlessness. The Indian people did not become much more truthful than they were, nor did they change their essential nature overnight ; nevertheless a sea-change was visible as the need for falsehood and furtive behaviour lessened. It was a psychological change, almost as if some expert in psycho analytical methods had probed deep into the patient's past, found out the origins of his complexes, exposed them to his view, and thus rid him of that burden.

There was that psychological reaction also, a feeling of shame at our long submission to an alien rule that had degraded and humiliated us, and a desire to submit no longer whatever the consequences might be.

We did not grow much more truthful perhaps than we had been previously, but Gandhi was always there as a symbol of uncompromising truth to pull us up and shame us into truth. What is truth ? I do not know for certain, and perhaps our truths are relative and absolute truth is beyond us. Different persons may and do take different views of truth, and each individual is powerfully influenced by his own background, training, and impulses. So also Gandhi. But truth is at least for an individual what he himself feels and knows to be true. According to this definition I do not know of any person who holds to the truth as Gandhi does. That is a dangerous quality in a politician, for he speaks out his mind and even lets the public see its changing phases.

Gandhi influenced millions of people in India in varying degrees ; some changed the whole texture of their lives, others were only partly affected, or the effect wore off ; and yet not quite, for some part of it could not be wholly shaken off.

Different people reacted differently and each will give his own answer to this question. Some might well say almost in the words of Alcibiades : 'Besides, when we listen to anyone else talking, however eloquent he is, we don't really care a damn what he says ; but when we listen to you, or to someone else repeating what you've said, even if he puts it ever so badly, and never mind whether the person who is listening is man, woman, or child, we're absolutely staggered and bewitched. And speaking for myself, gentlemen, if I wasn't afraid you'd tell me I was completely bottled, 'I'd swear on oath what an extraordinary effect his words have had on me—and still do, if it comes to that. For the moment I hear him speak I am smitten by a kind of sacred rage, worse than any corybant, and my heart jumps into my mouth and the tears start into my eyes—Oh, and not only me, but lots of other men.

'And there is one thing I've never felt with anybody else — not the kind of thing you would expect to find in me, either— and that is a sense of shame. Socrates is the only man in the world that can make me feel ashamed. Because there's no getting away from it, I know I ought to do the things he tells me to ; and yet the moment I'm out of his sight I don't care what I do to keep in with the mob. So I dash off like a runaway slave, and keep out of his way as long as I can : and the next time I meet him I remember all that I had to admit the time before, and naturally I feel ashamed...

'Yes, I have heard Pericles and all the other great orators, and very eloquent I thought they were ; but they never affected me like that ; they never turned my whole soul upside down and left me feeling as if I were the lowest of the low ; but this latter day Maryas, here, has often left me in such a state of mind that I've felt I simply couldn't go on living the way I did......

'Only I've been bitten by something much more poisonous than a snake ; in fact, mine is the most painful kind of bite there is. I've been bitten in the heart, or the mind or whatever you like to call it......'*

*From 'The Five Diatogues of Plato' Everyman's Library.

The Congress Becomes a Dynamic Organization under Gandhi's Leadership

Gandhi for the first time entered the Congress organization and immediately brought about a complete change in its constitution. He made it democratic and a mass organization. Democratic it had been previously also but it had so far been limited in franchise and restricted to the upper classes. Now the peasants rolled in and, in its new garb, it began to assume the look of a vast agrarian organization with a strong sprinkling of the middle classes. This agrarian character was to grow. Industrial workers also came in but as individuals and not in their separate organized capacity.

Action was to be the basis and objective of this organization, action based on peaceful methods. Thus far the alternatives had been just talking and passing resolutions, or terroristic activity. Both of these were set aside and terrorism was especially condemned as opposed to the basic policy of the Congress. A new technique of action was evolved which, though perfectly peaceful, yet implied non-submission to what was considered wrong and, as a consequence, a willing acceptance of the pain and suffering involved in this. Gandhi was an odd kind of pacifist, for he was an activist full of dynamic energy. There was no submission in him to fate or anything that he considered evil; he was full of resistance, though this was peaceful and courteous.

The call of action was two-fold. There was, of course, the action involved in challenging and resisting foreign rule; there was also the action which led us to fight our own social evils. Apart from the fundamental objective of the Congress—the freedom of India—and the method of peaceful action, the principal planks of the Congress were national unity, which involved the solution of the minority problems, and the raising of the depressed classes and the ending of the curse of untouchability.

Realizing that the main props of British rule were fear, prestige, the co-operation, willing or unwilling, of the people,

and certain classes whose vested interests were centred in British rule, Gandhi attacked these foundations. Titles were to be given up and though the title-holders responded to this only in small measure, the popular respect for these British-given titles disappeared and they became symbols of degradation. New standards and values were set up and the pomp and splendour of the viceregal court and the princes, which used to impress so much, suddenly appeared supremely ridiculous and vulgar and rather shameful, surrounded as they were by the poverty and misery of the people. Rich men were not so anxious to flaunt their riches; outwardly at least many of them adopted simpler ways, and in their dress, became almost indistinguishable from humbler folk.

The older leaders of the Congress, bred in a different and more quiescent, tradition, did not take easily to these new ways and were disturbed by the upsurge of the masses. Yet so powerful was the wave of feeling and sentiment that swept through the country, that some of this intoxication filled them also. A very few fell away and among them was Mr. M.A. Jinnah. He left the Congress not because of any difference of opinion on the Hindu-Moslem question but because he could not adapt himself to the new and more advanced ideology, and even more so because he disliked the crowds of ill-dressed people, talking in Hindustani, who filled the Congress. His idea of politics was of a superior variety, more suited to the legislative chamber or to a committee-room. For some years he felt completely out of the picture and even decided to leave India for good. He settled down in England and spent several years there.

It is said, and I think with truth, that the Indian habit of mind is essentially one of quietism. Perhaps old races develop that attitude to life; a long tradition of philosophy also leads to it and yet Gandhi, a typical product of India, represente the very antithesis of quietism. He has been a demon of energy and action, a hustler, and a man who not only drives himself but drives others He has done more than anyone I know to fight and change the quietism of the Indian people.

He sent us to the villages, and the countryside hummed with the activity of innumerable messengers of the new gospel of

action. The peasant was shaken up and he began to emerge from his quiescent shell. The effect on us was different but equally far-reaching, for we saw, for the first time as it were, the villager in the intimacy of his mud-hut, and with the stark shadow of hunger always pursuing him. We learnt our Indian economics more from these visits than from books and learned discourses. The emotional experience we had already undergone was emphasized and confirmed and henceforward there could be no going back for us to our old life or our old standards, howsoever much our views might change subsequently.

Gandhi held strong views on economic, social, and other matters. He did not try to impose all of these on the Congress, though he continued to develop his ideas, and sometimes in the process varied them, through his writings. But some he tried to push into the Congress. He proceeded cautiously for he wanted to carry the people with him. Sometimes he went too far for the Congress and had to retrace his steps. Not many accepted his views in their entirety ; some disagreed with that fundamental outlook. But many accepted them in the modified form in which they came to the Congress as being suited to the circumstances then existing. In two respects the background of his thought had a vague but considerable influence ; the fundamental test of everything was how far it benefited the masses, and the means were always important and could not be ignored even though the end in view was right, for the means governed the end and varied it.

Gandhi was essentially a man of religion, a Hindu to the inner-most depths of his being, and yet his conception of religion had nothing to do with any dogma or custom or ritual.* It was basically concerned with his firm belief in the

*Gandhi told the Federation of International Fellowships in January, 1928, that 'After long study and experience I have come to these conclusions that : (1) all religions are true, (2) all religions have some error in them, (3) all religions are almost as dear to me as my own Hinduism. My veneration for other faiths is the same as for my own faith. Consequently, the thought of conversion is impossible......Our prayer for others ought never to be : "God give them the light thou has given to me !" But : "Give them all the light and truth they need for their highest development !"

moral law, which he calls the law of truth or love. Truth and non-violence appear to him to be the same thing or different aspects of one and the same thing, and he uses these words almost interchangeably. Claiming to understand the spirit of Hinduism, he rejects every text or practice which does not fit in with his idealist interpretation of what it should be, calling it an interpolation or a subsequent accretion. 'I decline to be a slave,' he has said, 'to precedents or practice I cannot understand or defend on a moral basis.' And so in practice he is singularly free to take the path of his choice, to change and adapt himself, to develop his philosophy of life and action, subject only to the over-riding consideration of the moral law as he conceives this to be. Whether that philosophy is right or wrong, may be argued, but he insists on applying the same fundamental yard-stick to everything, and himself especially In politics, as in other aspects of life, this creates difficulties for the average person, and often misunderstanding. But no difficulty makes him swerve from the straight line of his choosing, though within limits he is continually adapting himself to a changing situation. Every reform that he suggests, every advice that he gives to others, he straightway applies to himself. He is always beginning with himself and his words and actions fit into each other like a glove on the hand. And so, whatever happens, he never loses his integrity and there is always an organic completeness about his life and work. Even in his apparent failures he has seemed to grow in stature

What was his idea of India which he was setting out to mould according to his own wishes and ideals ? 'I shall work for an India in which the poorest shall feel that it is their country, in whose making they have an effective voice, an India in which there shall be no high class and low class of people, an India in which all communities shall live in perfect harmony... ..There can be no room in such an India for the curse of untouchability or the curse of intoxicating drinks and drugs... ..Women will enjoy the same right as men......This is the India of my dreams.' Proud of his Hindu inheritance as he was, he tried to give to Hinduism a kind of universal attire and included all religions within the fold of truth. He refused to narrow his cultural inheritance.

'Indian culture,' he wrote, 'is neither Hindu, Islamic, nor any other, wholly. It is a fusion of all.' Again he said : 'I want the culture of all lands to be blown about my house as freely as possible. But I refuse to be blown off my feet by any. I refuse to live in other peoples' houses as an interloper, a beggar, or a slave.' Influenced by modern thought currents, he never let go of his roots and clung to them tenaciously.

And so he set about to restore the spiritual unity of the people and to break the barrier between the small westernized group at the top and the masses, to discover the living elements in the old roots and to build upon them, to waken these masses out of their stupor and static condition and make them dynamic. In his single-track and yet many-sided nature the dominating impression that one gathered was his identification with the masses, a community of spirit with them, an amazing sense of unity with the dispossessed and poverty-stricken not only of India but of the world. Even religion, as everything else, took second place to his passion to raise these submerged people. 'A semi-starved nation can have neither religion, nor art nor organization.' 'Whatever can be useful to starving millions is beautiful to my mind. Let us give to-day first the vital things of life, and all the graces and ornaments of life will follow...I want art and literature that can speak to millions.' These unhappy dispossessed millions haunted him and everything seemed to revolve round them. 'For millions it is an eternal vigil or an eternal trance.' His ambition, he said, was 'to wipe every tear from every eye.'

It is not surprising that this astonishingly vital man, full of self-confidence and an unusual kind of power, standing for equality and freedom for each individual, but measuring all this in terms of the poorest, fascinated the masses of India and attracted them like a magnet. He seemed to them to link up the past with the future and to make the dismal present appear just as a stepping-stone to that future of life and hope. And not the masses only but intellectuals and others also, though their minds were often troubled and confused and the change-over for them from the habits of a lifetime was more

difficult. Thus he effected a vast psychological revolution not only among those who followed his lead but also among his opponents and those many neutrals who could not make up their minds what to think and what to do.

Congress was dominated by Gandhi and yet it was a peculiar domination, for the Congress was an active, rebellious, manysided organization, full of variety of opinion, and not easily led this way or that. Often Gandhi toned down his position to meet the wishes of others, sometimes he accepted even an adverse decision. On some vital matters of him, he was adamant, and on more than one occasion there came a break between him and the Congress. But always he was the symbol of India's independence and militant nationalism, the unyielding opponent of all those who sought to enslave her, and it was as such a symbol that people gathered to him and accepted his lead, even though they disagreed with him on other matters. They did not always accept that lead when there was no active struggle going on, but when the struggle was inevitable that symbol became all important, and everything else was secondary.

Thus in 1920 the National Congress, and to a large extent the country, took to this new and unexplored path and came into conflict repeatedly with the British power. The conflict was inherent both in these methods and in the new situation that had arisen, yet back of all this was not political tactics and manoevuring but the desire to strengthen the Indian people, for by that strength alone could they achieve independence and retain it. Civil disobedience struggles came one after the other, involving enormous suffering, but that suffering was self invited and therefore strength giving, not the kind which overwhelms the unwilling, leading to despair and defeatism. The unwilling also suffered, caught in the wide net of fierce governmental repression, and even the willing sometimes broke up and collapsed. But many remained true and steadfast, harder for all the experience they had undergone. At no time, even when its fortunes were low, did Congress surrender to superior might or submit to foreign authority. It remained the symbol of India's passionate desire for independence and her will to resist alien

domination. It was because of this that vast numbers of the Indian people sympathized with it and looked to it for leadership, even though many of them were so weak and feeble, or so circumstanced, as to be unable to do anything themselves. The Congress was a party in some ways; it has also been a joint platform for several parties ; but essentially it was something much more, for it represented the innermost desire of vast numbers of our people. The number of members on its rolls, large as this was, was only a feeble reflection of its widespread representative character, for membership depended not on the people's desire to join but on our capacity to reach remote villages. Often (as now) we have been an illegal organisation, not existing at all in the eyes of the law, and our books and papers have been taken away by the police.

Even when there was no civil disobedience struggle going on, the general attitude of non-co-operation with the British apparatus of government in India continued, though it lost its aggressive character. That did not mean, of course, non-co-operation with Englishmen as such. When Congress governments were installed in many provinces, there was inevitably much co-operation in official and governmental work. Even then, however, that background did not change much and instructions were issued regulating the conduct of Congressmen, apart from official duties. Between Indian nationalism and an alien imperialism there could be no final peace, though temporary compromises and adjustments were sometimes inevitable. Only a free India could co-operate with England on equal terms.

Congress Governments in the Provinces

The British Parliament, after some years of commissions, committees, and debates, passed a Government of India Act in 1935. This provided for some kind of provincial autonomy and a federal structure, but there were so many reservations and checks that both political and economic power continued to be concentrated in the hands of the British Government. Indeed in some ways it confirmed and enlarged the powers of an executive responsible solely to that Government. The federal struc-

ture was so envisaged as to make any real advance impossible, and no loophole was left for the representatives of the Indian people to interfere with or modify the system of British-controlled administration. Any change or relaxation of this could only come through the British Parliament. Thus, reactionary as this structure was, there were not even any seeds in it of self-growth, short of some kind of revolutionary action. The Act strengthened the alliance between the British Government and the princes, landlords, and other reactionary elements in India : it added to the separate electorates, thus increasing the separatist tendencies : it consolidated the predominant position of British trade, industry, banking, and shipping and laid down statutory prohibitions against any interference with this position, any 'discrimination : as it was called ;* it retained in British hands complete control over Indian finance, military, and foreign affairs : it made the Viceroy even more powerful than he had been.

In the limited sphere of provincial autonomy the transfer of authority was, or appeared to be, much greater. Nevertheless, the position of a popular government was extraordinary. There were all the checks of viceregal powers and an irresponsible central authority, and even the Governor of the province, like the Viceroy, could intervene, veto, legislate on his own sole authority, and do almost anything he wanted even in direct opposition to the popular ministers and the provincial legislature. A great part of the revenues were mortgaged to various vested interests and could not be used. The superior services and the police were protected and could hardly be touched by

*The removal of these statutory prohibitions is still fiercely resisted by representatives of British industry and trade in India. In April, 1945, a resolution demanding this removal was passed n the Central Assembly in spite of British opposition. Indian nationalism, and indeed all Indian parties and groups are strongly in favour of this removal, and of course Indian industrialists are most anxious about it. And yet, it is significant to note that Indian businessmen in Ceylon are demanding exactly the same kind of protection in Ceylon which they rightly resent having been given to British business interests in India. Self-interest not only blinds one to justice and fair play but also to the simplest applications of logic and reason.

the minister. They were wholly authoritarian in outlook and looked, as of old, to the Governor for guidance and not to the ministers. And yet these were the very people through whom the popular government had to function. The whole complicated structure of government remained as it was, from the Governor down to the petty official and policeman ; only somewhere in the middle a few ministers, responsible to a popularly elected legislature, were thrust in to carry on as best they could. If the Governor (who represented British authority) and the services under him agreed and fully co-operated with the ministers, the apparatus of government might function smoothly. Otherwise—and this was much more likely, as the policy and methods of a popular government differed entirely from the old authoritarian police-state ways—there was bound to be continuous friction. Even when the Governor or the services were not openly at variance with or disloyal to the policy of the popular government, they could obstruct, delay, pervert, and undo what that Government did or wished to do. In law there was nothing to prevent the Governor and the Viceroy from acting as they liked, even in active opposition to the ministry and the legislature ; the only real check was fear of conflict. The ministers might resign, no others could command a majority in the legislature, and popular upheavals might follow. It was the old constitutional conflict between an autocratic king and parliament which had so often taken place elsewhere, leading to revolutions and the suppression of the king. Here the king was in addition a foreign authority, supported by foreign military and economic power and the special interests and lap-dog breed it had created in the country.

About this time also Burma was separated from India. In Burma there had been a conflict between British and Indian and, to some extent, Chinese, economic and commercial interests. It had therefore been British policy to encourage anti Indian and anti-Chinese sentiments among the Burmese people. This policy was helpful for some time, but when it was joined on to a denial of freedom to the Burmese, it resulted in creating the powerful pro-Japanese movements in Burma

which came to the surface when the Japanese attacked in 1942.

The Act of 1935 was bitterly opposed by all sections of Indian opinion. While the part dealing with provincial autonomy was severely criticized for its many reservations and the powers given to the Governors and the Viceroy, the federal part was even more resented. Federation as such was not opposed and it was generally recognized that a federal structure was desirable for India, but the proposed federation petrified British rule and vested interests in India. Only the provincial autonomy part of it was applied and the Congress decided to contest elections. But the question whether responsibility for provincial governments should be undertaken, within the terms of the Act, led to fierce debate within the Congress. The success of the Congress in the elections was overwhelming in most af the provinces, but still there was hesitation in accepting ministerial responsibility unless it was made clear that there would be no interference by the Governor or Viceroy. After some months vague assurances were given to this effect and Congress governments were established in July, 1937. Ultimately there were such governments in eight of the eleven provinces, the three remaining ones being Sind, Bengal, and Punjab. Sind was a small, newly created, and rather unstable province. In Bengal the Congress had the largest single party in the legislature, but as it was not in a majority, it did not participate in the Government. Bengal (or rather, Calcutta) being the principal headquarters of British capital in India, the European commercial element has been given astonishingly heavy representation. In numbers they are a mere handful (some thousands) and yet they have been given twenty-five seats as compared to the fifty seats for the general non-Moslem population consisting of about seventeen millions (apart from the scheduled castes) of the whole province. This British group in the legislature thus plays an important part in Bengal politics and can make or unmake ministries.

The Congress could not possibly accept the Act of 1935 as even a temporary solution of the Indian problem. It was pledged

to independence and to combat the Act. Yet a majority had decided to work provincial autonomy. It had thus a dual policy : to carry on the struggle for independence and at the same time to carry through the legislatures constructive measures of reform. The agrarian question especially demanded immediate attention.

The question of Congressmen joining other groups to form coalition governments was considered, although there was no necessity for this as the Congress had clear majorities. Still it was desirable to associate as many people as possible in the work of government. There was nothing inherently wrong about coalitions at all times, and indeed some form of coalition was agreed to in the Frontier Province and in Assam. As a matter of fact, the Congress itself was a kind of coalition or joint front of various groups tied together by the dominating urge for India's independence. In spite of this variety within its fold, it had developed a discipline, a social outlook, and a capacity to offer battle in its own peaceful way. A wider coalition meant to joining up with people whose entire political and social outlook was different, and who were chiefly interested in office and ministerships. Conflict was inherent in the situation, conflict with the representatives of British interests—the Viceroy, the Governor, the superior services ; conflict also with vested interests in land and industry over agrarian questions and workers' conditions. The non-Congress elements were usually politically and socially conservative ; some of them were pure careerists. If such elements entered government, they might tone down our whole social programme, or at any rate obstruct and delay it. There might even be intrigues with the Governor over the heads of the other ministers A joint front against British authority was essential. Any breach in this would be harmful to our cause. There would have been no binding cement, no common loyalty, no united objective, and individual ministers would have looked and pulled in different directions.

Our public life naturally included many who could be called politicians and nothing more, careerists, both in the good and bad sense of the word. There were able, earnest, and patriotic

men and women, as well as careerists, both in the Congress and in other organizations. But the Congress had been, ever since 1920, something much more than a constitutional political party, and the breath of revolutionary action, actual or potential, surrounded it and often put it outside the pale of the law. The fact that this action was not connected with violence, secret intrigue, and conspiracy, the usual accompaniments of revolutionary activity, did not make it any the less revolutionary. Whether it was right or wrong, effective or not, may be an arguable matter, but it is manifest that it involved cold-blooded courage and endurance of a high order. Perhaps it is easier to indulge in short violent spurts of courage, even unto death, than to give up, under the sole compulsion of one's own mind, almost everything that life offers and carry on in this way day after day, month after month, year after year. That is a test which few can survive anywhere and it is surprising that so many in India have stood it successfully.

The Congress parties in the legislatures were anxious to pass legislative measures in favour of the peasants and workers as soon as possible before some crisis overwhelmed them. That sense of impending crisis was always present ; it was inherent in the situation. In nearly all the provinces there were second chambers elected on a very limited franchise and thus representing vested interests in land and industry. There were also other checks to progressive legislation. Coalition governments would add to all these difficulties and it was decided not to have them to begin with, except in Assam and the Frontier.

This decision was itself by no means final and the possibility of change was kept in view, but rapidly developing circumstances made any change more difficult and the Congress governments in the provinces became entangled in the numerous problems that urgently demanded solution. In subsequent years there has been much argument about the wisdom of that decision and opinions have differed. It is easy to be wise after the event, but I am still inclined to think that politically, and situated as we were then, it was a natural and logical decision

for us. Nevertheless it is true that the consequences of it on the communal question were unfortunate and it led to a feeling of grievance and isolation among many Moslems. This played into the hands of reactionary elements who utilized it to strengthen their own position among certain groups.

Politically and constitutionally, the new Act and the establishment of Congress governments in the provinces made no vital difference to the British structure of government. Real power remained where it had so long been. But the psychological change was enormous and an electric current seemed to run through the countryside. This change was noticeable more in the rural areas than in the cities, though in the industrial centres the workers also reacted in the same way. There was a sense of immense relief as of the lifting of a weight which had been oppressing the people; there was a release of long-suppressed mass energy which was evident everywhere. The fear of the police and secret service vanished for a while at least and even the poorest peasant added to his of self-respect and self-reliance. For the first time he felt that he counted and could not be ignored. Government was no longer feeling an unknown and intangible monster, separated from him by innumerable layers of officials, whom he could not easily approach and much less influence, and who were bent on extracting as much out of him as possible. The seats of the mighty were now occupied by men he had often seen and heard and talked to; sometimes they had been in prison together and there was a feeling of comradeship between them.

At the headquarters of the provincial governments, in the very citadels of the old bureaucracy, many a symbolic scene was witnessed. These provincial secretariats, as they were called, where all the high offices were congregated, had been the holy of holies of government, and out of them issued mysterious orders which none could challenge. Policemen and red-liveried orderlies, with shining daggers thrust in their waistbands, guarded the precincts, and only those who were fortunate or greatly daring or had a long purse, could pass them. Now, suddenly, hordes of people, from the city and the village, entered these sacred precincts and roamed about

almost at will. They were interested in everything; they went into the Assembly Chamber, where the sessions used to be held; they even peeped into the Ministers' rooms. It was difficult to stop them for they no longer felt as outsiders; they had a sense of ownership in all this, although it was all very complicated for them and difficult to understand. The policemen and orderlies with shining daggers were paralysed; the old standards had fallen: European dress, symbol of position and authority, no longer counted. It was difficult to distinguish between members of the legislatures and the peasants and townsmen who came in such large numbers. They were often dressed more or less alike, mostly in handspun cloth with the well-known Gandhi cap on their heads.

It had been very different in the Punjab and in Bengal where ministries had come into existence several months earlier. There had been no impasse there and the change-over had taken place quietly without ruffling the surface of life in any way. In the Punjab especially the old order continued and most of the ministers were not new. They had been high officials previously and they continued to be so. Between them and the British administration there was no conflict or sense of tension, for politically that administration was supreme

This difference between the Congress provinces and Bengal and Punjab was immediately apparent in regard to civil liberties and political prisoners. In both Bengal and Punjab there was no relaxation of the police and secret service *raj*, and political prisoners were not released. In Bengal, where the ministry often depended on European votes, there were in addition thousands of *detenus*, that is, men and women kept indefinitely for years and years in prison without charge or trial. In the Congress provinces, however, the very first step taken was the release of political prisoners. In regard to some of these, who had been convicted for violent activities, there was delay because of the Governor's refusal to agree. Matters came to a head early in 1938 over this issue and two of the Congress Governments (United Provinces and Bihar) actually offered their resignations. Thereupon the Governor withdrew his objections and the prisoners were released.

Indian Dynamism versus British Conservatism in India

The new provincial assemblies had a much larger representation from the rural areas and this inevitably led to a demand in all of them for agrarian reforms. In Bengal, because of the permanent settlement and for other reasons, the condition of the tenantry was worst of all. Next came the other big zamindari (landlord) provinces, chiefly Bihar and the United Provinces, and thirdly the provinces where originally some kind of peasant proprietorship had been established (Madras, Bombay, Punjab, etc), but where big landed estates had also grown up. The permanent settlement came in the way of any effective reform in Bengal. Almost everybody is agreed that this must go, and even an official commission has recommended it, but vested interests still manage to prevent or delay change. The Punjab was fortunate in having fresh land at its disposal.

For the Congress the agrarian question was the dominating social issue and much time had been given to its study and the formulation of policy. This varied in different provinces as conditions were different and also the class composition of the provincial Congress organizations differed from one another. There was an all-India agrarian policy which had been formulaed by the central organization and each province added to it and filled in the details. The United Provinces Congress was in this respect the most advanced and it had reached the conclusion that the zamindari (landlord) system should be abolished. This, however, was impossible under the Government of India Act of 1935, even apart from the special powers of the Viceroy and the Governor, and the second chamber which largely consisted of the landed class. Changes had thus to be made within the larger framework of this system, unless of course some revolutionary upheaval ended that system itself. This made reform difficult and terribly complicated and it took much longer than was anticipated.

However, substantial agrarian reforms were introduced and the problem of rural indebtedness was also attacked. So also labour conditions in factories, public health and sanitation,

local self-government, education both in the lower stages and in the university, literacy, industry, rural development, and many other problems were tackled. All these social, cultural, and economic problems had been ignored and neglected by previous governments, their function had been to make the police and the revenue departments efficient and to allow the rest to take their own course. Occasionally some little effort had been made and commissions and inquiry committees had been appointed, which produced huge reports after years of labour and travelling about. Then the reports had been put away in their respective pigeon-holes and little was done. Even proper statistics had not been collected, in spite of insistent popular demand. This lack of statistics and surveys and necessary information has been a serious impediment in the way of progress in any direction. Thus the new provincial governments had, apart from the normal work of administration, to face a mountain of work, the result of years of neglect, and on every side urgent problems faced them. They had to change a police-state into a socially-guided state—never an easy job but made much more difficult by the limitation on their power, the poverty of the people, and the divergence of outlook between these provincial governments and the central authority, which was completely autocratie and authoritarian, under the Viceroy.

We knew all these limitations and barriers, we realized in our hearts that we could not do much till conditions were radically changed—hence our overwhelming desire for independence—and yet the passion for progress filled us and the wish to emulate other countries which had gone so far ahead in many ways. We thought of the United States of America and even of some eastern countries which were forging ahead. But most of all we had the example of the Soviet Union which in two brief decades, full of war and civil strife and in the face of what appeared to be insurmountable difficulties, had made tremendous progress. Some were attracted to communism, others were not, but all were fascinated by the advance of the Soviet Union in education and culture and medical care and physical fitness and in the

solution of the problem of nationalities—by the amazing and prodigious effort to create a new world out of the dregs of the old. Even Rabindranath Tagore, highly individualistic as he was and not attracted towards some aspects of the communistic system, became an admirer of this new civilization and contrasted it with present conditions in his own country. In his last death-bed message he referred to the 'unsparing energy with which Russia has tried to fight disease and illiteracy. and has succeeded in steadily liquidating ignorance and poverty, wiping off the humiliation from the face of a vast continent. Her civilization is free from all invidious distinctions between one class and another, between one sect and another. The rapid and astounding progress achieved by her made me happy and jealous as the same time...When I see elsewhere some 200 nationalities—which only a few years ago were at vastly different stages of development—marching ahead in peaceful progress and amity, and when I look about my own country and see a very highly evolved and intellectual people drifting into the disorder of barbarism, I cannot help contrasting the two systems of governments, one based on co-operation, the other on exploitation, which have made such contrary conditions possible.'

If other could do it, why not we ? We had faith in our capacity, our intelligence, our will to persevere, to endure and succeed. We knew the difficulties, our poverty and backwardness, our reactionary groups and classes, our divisions ; yet we would face them and overcome them. We knew that the price was a heavy one, but we were prepared to pay it, for no price could be greater than what we paid from day to day in our present condition. But how were we to begin on our internal problems when the external problem of British rule and occupation faced us at every turn and nullified our every effort ?

Yet since we had some opportunity, however limited and restricted, in these provincial governaments, we wanted to take advantage of it in the fullest measure. But it was a heart-breaking job for our ministers, who were overwhelmed with work and responsibility, and could not even share this with the permanent services, because of the lack of harmony and the

absence of a common outlook. Unfortunately also, the number of these ministers was much too small. They were supposed to set an example in plain living and economy in public expenditure. Their salaries were small, and we had the curious spectacle of a minister's secretary or some other subordinate belonging to the Indian Civil Service drawing a salary and allowances which were four or five times the minister's salary. We could not touch the emoluments of the Civil Service. Also the minister would travel second-class by railway train, or even third, while some subordinate of his might be travelling first or in a lordly saloon in the same train.

It has often been stated that the central Congress Executive continually interfered with the work of these provincial governments by issuing orders from above This is entirely incorrect, and there was no interference with the internal administration. What the Congress Executive desired was that a common policy on all fundamental political matters should be followed by the provincial governments, and that the Congress programme, as laid down in the election manifesto, should be furthered in so far as this was possible. In particular, the policy *vis-a-vis* the governors and the Government of India had to be uniform.

The introduction of provincial autonomy without any change in the central government, which continued to be wholly irresponsible and authoritarian, was likely to lead to a growth of provincialism and diversity, and thus to a lessening of the sense of Indian unity. Probably the British Government had this in view in furtherance of its policy of encouraging disruptive elements and tendencies. The Government of India, irremovable, irresponsible, and unresponsive, still representing the old tradition of British imperialism, stood as solid as a rock, and, of course, pursued a uniform policy with all the provincial governments. The Governors, acting on instructions from New Delhi or Simla, did likewise. If the Congress provincial governments had reacted differently from this, each in its own way, they could have been disposed of separately. It was essential, therefore, for these provincial governments to hold together and present a united front to the Government of India. The

Government of India, on the other hand, was equally anxious to prevent this co-operation, and preferred to deal with each provincial government separately without reference to similar problems elsewhere.

In August, 1937, soon after the formation of the Congress provincial governments, the Congress Executive passed the following resolution :

'The Working Committee recommend to the Congress ministers the appointment of a committee of experts to consider urgent and vital problems, the solution of which is necessary to any scheme of national reconstruction and social planning. Such solution will require extensive surveys and the collection of data, as well as a clearly-defined social objective. Many of these problems cannot be dealt with efficiently on a provincial basis, and the interests of adjoining provinces are interlinked. Comprehensive river surveys are necessary for the formulation of a policy to prevent disastrous floods, to utilise the water for the purposes of irrigation, to consider the problem of soil erosion, to eradicate malaria, and for the development of hydro-electric and other schemes. For this purpose the whole river valley will have to be surveyed and investigated, and large-scale state planning resorted to. The development and control of industries require also joint and co-ordinate action on the part of several provinces. The Working Committee advise therefore that, to begin with, an inter-provincial committee of experts be appointed to consider the general nature of the problems to be faced, and to suggest how, and in what order, those should be tackled. This expert committee may suggest the formation of special committees or boards to consider each such problem separately, and to advise the provincal governments concerned as to the joint action to be undertaken.'

This resolution indicates the kind of advice that was sometimes tendered to the provincial governments. It shows also how desirous the Congress Executive was to encourage co-operation between provincial governments in the economic and industrial sphere. That co-operation was not limited to the

Congress governments, although the advice was necessarily addressed to them. A comprehensive river survey overlapped provincial boundaries; a survey of the Gangetic valley and the setting up of a Ganga River Commission (a work of the highest importance which yet awaits to be done) could only take place with the co-operation of the three provincial governments—those of the United Provinces, Bihar, and Bengal.

The resolution also demonstrates the importance attached by the Congress to large-scale state planning. Such planning was impossible so long as the central government was not under popular control and the shackles on the provincial governments had not been removed. We hoped, however, that some essential preliminary work might be done and the foundations for future planning laid down. Unfortunately, the provincial governments were so busy with their own problems that there was delay in giving effect to this resolution. Late in 1938 a National Planning Committee was constituted, and I became chairman of it.

I was often critical of the work of the Congress Governments and fretted at the slowness of progress made; but, looking back, I am surprised at their achievements during a brief period of two years and a quarter, despite the innumerable difficulties that surrounded them. Unfortunately, some of their important work did not bear fruit, as it was on the point of completion when they resigned, and it was shelved afterwards by their successor—that is, the British Governor. Both the peasantry and industrial labour benefited and grew in strength. One of the most important and far-reaching achievements was the introduction of a system of mass education called basic education. This was not only based on the latest educational doctrine but was peculiarly suited to Indian conditions.

Every vested interest came in the way of progressive change. A committee appointed by the United Provinces Government to inquire into labour conditions in the Cawnpore textile industry was treated by the employers (chiefly Europeans but including

some Indians) with the greatest discourtesy, and many of the facts and figures demanded were refused. Labour had long faced the organized opposition of both the employers and Government, and the police had always been at the disposal of the employers. The change in policy introduced by the Congress Governments was therefore resented by the employers. Of the tactics of employers in India, Mr. B. Shiva Rao, who has had long experience of the Labour movement in India and belongs to the moderate wing of it, writes : 'The amount of resourcefulness and lack of scruple exhibited on such occasions (strikes etc.) by the employers with the assistance of police would be incredible to one unacquainted with Indian conditions.' The government of most countries, constituted as it is, inclines towards the employers. In India, Mr. Shiva Rao points out, there is an additional reason for this. 'Apart from personal animosities, officials in India with rare exceptions have been obsessed with the fear that trade unions, if allowed to develop, would foster mass consciousness ; and with the political struggle in India periodically flaring up into movements like non-co-operation and civil disobedience, they have felt presumably that no risks should be taken in regard to the organization of the masses.'*

Governments lay down policy, legislatures pass laws ; but the actual working out of this policy and the application of these laws depend ultimately on the services and the administrative personnel. The provincial governments had thus inevitably to rely on the permanent services, especially the Indian civil service and the police. These services, bred in a different and authoritarian tradition, disliked the new atmosphere, the assertive attitude of the public, the lessening of their own importance, and their subordination to persons whom they had been in the habit of arresting and imprisoning. They had been rather apprehensive at first as to what might happen. But nothing very revolutionary happened and they gradually settled down to their old routine. It was not easy for the ministers to interfere with the man on the spot and only in obvious

*hiva Rao '*The Industrial Worker in India*' (London, 1939).

cases could they do so. The services formed a close corporation and hung together, and if one man was transferred, his successor was likely to act in the same way. It was impossible to change suddenly the old reactionary and autocratic mentality of the services as a whole. A few individuals might change, some might make an effort to adapt themselves to the new conditions, but the vast majority of them thought differently and had always functioned differently ; how could they undergo a sea change and emerge as crusaders of a new order ? At the most they could give a passive and heavy-moving loyalty ; there could not, in the very-nature of things, be a flaming enthusiasm for the new kind of work to be done, in which they did not believe and which undermined their own vested interests. Unfortunately even this passive loyalty was often lacking.

Among the higher members of the civil service, long accustomed to authoritarian methods and unchecked rule, there was a feeling that these ministers and legislators were intruders in a domain reserved for them. The old conception that they, the permanent services and especially the British element in them, were India and all others were unimportant appendages, died hard. It was not easy to suffer the new-comers, much less to take orders from them. They felt as an orthodox Hindu might feel if untouchables pushed their way into the sacred precincts of his own particular temple. The edifice of prestige and racial superiority which had been built with so much labour, and which had almost become a religion to them, was cracking. The Chinese are said to be great believers in 'face,' and yet I doubt if any among them are so passionately attached to 'face' as the British in India. For the latter it is not only individual, racial, and national prestige ; it is also intimately connected with their rule and vested interests.

Yet the intruders had to be tolerated, but the toleration grew progressively less as the sense of danger receded. This attitude permeated all departments of the administration, but it was especially in evidence away from headquarters, in the districts, and in matters relating to, what is called, Law and Order, which was the special preserve of the district magistrate

and the police. The emphasis of the Congress governments on civil liberty gave the local officials and the police an excuse for allowing things to happen which, ordinarily, no government could have permitted. Indeed I am convinced that in some cases the initiative for these undesirable occurrences came from the local officials or the police. Many of the communal (religious) riots that took place were due to a variety of causes, but the magistrates and the police were certainly not always free from guilt. Experience showed that a quick and efficient handling of the situation put an end to the trouble. What we saw repeatedly was an astonishing slackness and a deliberate evasion of duty. It became obvious that the objective was to discredit the Congress governments. In the Provinces, the industrial city of Cawnpore offered the most glaring example of utter ineptitude and mismanagement on the part of the local officials, which could only be deliberate. Communal (religious) friction, leading sometimes to local riots, had been more in evidence in the late twenties and early thirties. After the Congress governments took office it was in many ways much less. It changed its nature and became definitely political and deliberately encouraged and organized.

The civil service had a reputation, chiefly self-propagated, for efficiency. But it became evident that outside the narrow sphere of work to which they had been accustomed, they were helpless and incompetent. They had no training to function democratically and could not gain the goodwill and co-operation of the people, whom they both feared and despised ; they had no conception of big and fast-moving schemes of social progress and could only hamper them by their red-tape and lack of imagination. Apart from certain individuals, this applied to both British and Indian members of the higher services. It was extraordinary how unfitted they were for the new tasks that faced them.

There was, of course, a great deal of inefficiency and incompetence on the popular side. But it was counterbalanced by energy and enthusiasm, and close touch with masses, and a desire and capacity to learn from one's own mistakes. There was vitality there, a bubbling life, a sense of tension, a desire

to get things done, all of which contrasted strangely with the apathy and conservatism of the British ruling class and their supporters. India, the land of tradition, thus offered a strange picture of reversal of roles. The British, who had come here as representatives of a dynamic society, were now the chief upholders of a static, unchanging tradition ; among the Indians there were many who represented the new dynamic order and were eager for change, change not only political but also social and economic. Behind those Indians there were, of course, vast new forces at work which perhaps even they hardly realized. This reversal of roles was a demonstration of the fact that whatever creative or progressive role the British might have played in the past in India, they had long ceased to play it, and were now a hindrance and an obstruction to all progress. The tempo of their official life was slow and incapable of solving any of the vital problems before India. Even their utterances, which used to have some clarity and strength, became turgid, inept, and lacking any real content.

There has long been a legend, propagated by British authorities, that the British Government, through its higher services in India, was training us for the difficult and intricate art of self-government. We had managed to carry on, and with a considerable degree of success, for a few thousand years before the British came here and gave us the advantage of their training. No doubt we lack many of the good qualities that we should possess, and some misguided persons even say that this deficiency has grown under British rule. But whatever our failings might be, it seemed obvious to us that the permanent services here were totally incapable of leading India in any progressive direction. The very qualities they possessed made them unhelpful, for the qualities necessary in a police state are utterly different from those required in a progressive democratic community. Before they could presume to train others, it would be necessary for them to untrain themselves, and to bathe in the waters of Lethe so that they might forget what they had been.

The odd position of a popular provincial government with an autocratic central government over it brought out many strange

contrasts. The Congress governments were anxious to preserve civil liberties and they checked the wide-flung activitien of the provincial C.I.D. (Criminal Investigation Departmet) whose chief function had been to shadow politicians and all those who were suspected of anti-government sentiments. While those activities were checked, the Imperial C.I.D. continued to function, probably with greater energy. Not only were our letters censored, but even the ministers' correspondence was sometimes subjected to this, though it was done quietly and not officially admitted. During the last quarter of a century or more I have not written a single letter, which has been posted in India, either to an Indian or a foreign address, without realizing that it would be seen, and possibly copied, by some secret service censor. Nor have I spoken on the telephone without remembering that my conversation was likely to be tapped. The letters that have reached me also have had to pass some censor. This does not mean that every single letter is always censored ; sometimes this has been done, at other times selected ones are examined. This has nothing to do with the war, when there is a double censorship.

Fortunately we have functioned in the open and there has been nothing to hide in our political activities. Nevertheless this feeling of being subjected to continuous censorship, to prying and tapping and overhearing, is not a pleasant one. It irritates and oppressess and even coins in the way of personal relationships. It is not easy to write as one would like to, with the censor peering over one's shoulder.

The ministers worked hard and many of them broke down under the strain. Their health deteriorated and all the freshness faded away, leaving them haggard and utterly weary. But a sense of purpose kept them going and they made their Indian civil service secretaries and their staffs work hard also ; the lights in their offices were on till late in the evening. When the Congress governments resigned early in November, 1939, there was many a sigh of relief ; the government offices were henceforth closed punctually at four in the afternoon, and reverted to their previous aspect of cloistered chambers where quiet prevailed and the public was not welcomed. Life went back to

its old routine and slow tempo, and the afternoons and evenings were free for polo and tennis and bridge and the amenities of club life. A bad dream had faded and business and play could now be carried on as in the old days. True, there was a war on, thus far only in Europe, and Poland had been crushed by Hitler's legions. But all this was far away, and anyway it was a phoney war. While soldiers did their duty and fought and died, here also duty had to be performed and this duty was to bear the white man's burden worthily and with dignity.

The brief period during which the Congress governments functioned in the provinces confirmed our belief that the major obstruction to progress in India was the political and economic structure imposed by the British. It was perfectly true that many traditional habits and social forms and practices were barriers to progress and they had to go. Yet the inherent tendency of Indian economy to expand was not restricted to much by these forms and habits as by the political and economic stranglehold of the British. But for that steel framework, expansion was inevitable, bringing in its wake many social changes and the ending of outworn customs and ceremonial patterns. Hence attention had to be concentrated on the removal of that framework, and the energy spent on other matters bore little result and was often like ploughing the sands. That framework was itself based on and protected the semi-fendal land tenure system and many other relics of the past. Any kind of democracy in India was incompatible with the British political and economic structure, and conflict between the two was inevitable. Hence the partial democracy of 1937-39 was always on the verge of conflict. Hence also the official British view that democracy in India had not been successful, because they could only consider it in terms of maintaining the structure and values and vested interests they had built up. As the kind of tame and subservient democracy of which they could have approved was not forthcoming, and all manner of radical changes were aimed at, the only alternative left to the British power was to revert to a purely authoritarian regime and put an end to all pretensions of democracy. There is a marked

similarity in the development of this outlook and the birth and growth of fascism in Europe. Even the rule of law on which the British had prided themselves in India gave place to something in the nature of a state of siege and rule by ordinance and decree.

The Question of Minorities
The Moslem League : Mr. M A. Jinnah

The development and growth of the Moslem League during the last seven years has been an unusual phenomenon. Started in 1906 with British encouragement and in order to keep away the new generation of Moslems from the National Congress, it remained a small upper-class organization controlled by feudal elements. It had no influence on the Moslem masses and was hardly known by them. By its very constitution it was limited to a small group and a permanent leadership which perpetuated itself. Even so, events and the growing middle class among the Moslems pushed it in the direction of the Congress. World War I and the fate of the Turkish Khilafat (Caliphate) and the Moslem holy places produced a powerful impression on the Moslems of India and made them intensely anti-British. The Moslem League, constituted as it was, could not offer any guidance or leadership to these awakened and excited masses ; indeed the League suffered from an attack of nerves and practically faded away. A new Moslem organization grew up in close co-operation with the Congress—the Khilafat Committee. Large numbers of Moslems also joined the Congress and worked through it. After the first non-co-operation movement of 1920-23, the Khilafat Committee also began to fade away as its very *raison d'etre* had disappeared—the Turkish Khilafat. The Moslem masses drifted away from political activity, as also the Hindu masses to a lesser extent. But a very considerable number of Moslems, chiefly of the middle classes, continued to function through the Congress.

During this period a number of petty Moslem organizations functioned spasmodically, often coming into conflict with each other. They had no mass affiliations, no political importance except such as was given to them by the British Government.

Their chief function was to demand special privileges and protection for the Moslems in the legislatures and services. In this matter they did represent a definite Moslem viewpoint, for there was a background of resentment and fear among the Moslems at the superior position of the Hindus in education, services, and industry, as well as in numbers. Mr. M A. Jinnah retired from Indian politics, and indeed from India, and settled down in England.

During the second Civil Disobedience movement of 1930 the response from the Moslems was very considerable, though less than in 1920-23. Among those who were jailed in connection with this movement there were at least 10,000 Moslems. The North-West Frontier Province, which is an almost entirely Moslem province (95 per cent Moslems) played a leading and remarkable part in this movement. This was largely due to the work and personality of Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan, the unquestioned and beloved leader of the Pathans in this province. Of all the remarkable happenings in India in recent times, nothing is more astonishing than the way in which Abdul Ghaffar Khan made his turbulent and quarrelsome people accept peaceful methods of political action, involving enormous suffering. That suffering was indeed terrible and has left a trail of bitter memories ; and yet their discipline and self control were such that no act of violence was committed by the Pathans against the Government forces or others opposed to them. When it is remembered that a Pathan loves his gun more than his brother, is easily excited, and has long had a reputation for killing at the slightest provocation, this self-discipline appears little short of miraculous.

The Frontier Provinces under Abdul Ghaffar Khan's leadership stood firmly by the side of the National Congress, so also did a large number of the politically conscious middle-class Moslems elsewhere. Among the peasantry and workers, Congress influence was considerable, especially in provinces like the United Provinces, which had an advanced agrarian and workers' programme. But it was none the less true that the Moslem masses as a whole were reverting vaguely to their old local and fuedal leadership, which came to them in the

guise of protectors of Moslem interests as against Hindus and others.

The communal problem, as it was called, was one of adjusting the claims of the minorities and giving them sufficient protection from majority action. Minorities in India, it must be remembered, are not racial or national minorities as in Europe; they are religious minorities. Racially India is a patchwork and a curious mixture, but no racial questions have arisen or can arise in India. Religion transcends these racial differences, which fade into one another and are often hard to distinguish. Religious barriers are obviously not permanent, as conversions can take place from one religion to another, and a person changing his religion does not thereby lose his racial background or his cultural and linguistic inheritance. Latterly religion, in any real sense of the word, has played little part in Indian political conflicts, though the word is often enough used and exploited. Religious differences, as such, do not come in the way, for there is a great deal of mutual tolerance for them In political matters, religion has been displaced by what is called communalism, a narrow group mentality basing itself on a religious community but in reality concerned with political power and patronage for the interested group.

Repeated efforts were made by the Congress as well as other organizations to settle this communal problem with the consent of the various groups concerned. Some partial success was achieved but there was always a basic difficulty—the presence and policy of the British Government. Naturally the British did not favour any real settlement which would strengthen the political movement—now grown to mass proportions—against them. It was a triangle with the Government in a position to play off one side against the other, by giving special privileges. If the other parties had been wise enough, they could have overcome even this obstacle, but they lacked wisdom and foresight. Whenever a settlement was almost reached, the Government would take some step which upset the balance.

There was dispute about the usual provisions for minority protection, such as the League of Nations used to lay down. All those were agreed to and much more. Religion, culture, language, the fundamental rights of the individual and the group, were all to be protected and assured by basic constitutional provisions in a democratic constitution applying equally to all. Apart from this, the whole history of India was witness of the toleration and even encouragement of minorities and of different racial groups. There is nothing in Indian history to compare with the bitter religious feuds and persecutions that prevailed in Europe. So we did not have to go abroad for ideas of religious and cultural toleration; these were inherent in Indian life. In regard to individual and political rights and civil liberties, we were influenced by the ideas of the French and American revolutions, as also by the constitutional history of the British Parliament. Socialistic ideas, and the influence of the Soviet revolution, came in later to give a powerful economic turn to our thoughts.

Apart from full protection of all such rights of the individual and the group, it was common ground that every effort should be made by the state as well as by private agencies to remove all invidious social and customary barriers which came in the way of the full development of the individual as well as any group, and that educationally and economically backward classes should be helped to get rid of their disabilities as rapidly as possible. This applied especially to the depressed classes. It was further laid down that women should share in every way with men in the privileges of citizenship.

What remained? Fear that bigger numbers might politically overwhelm a minority. Normally speaking, numbers meant the peasantry and the workers, the masses of all religious faiths, who had long been exploited not only by foreign rule but by their own upper classes. Having assured the protection of religion and culture, etc., the major problems that were bound to come up were economic ones which had nothing to do with a person's religion. Class conflicts there might well be but not

religious conflicts, except in so far as religion itself represented some vested interest. Nevertheless people had grown so accustomed to think along lines of religious cleavage, and were continually being encouraged to do so by communal religious organizations and Government action, that the fear of the major religious community, that is the Hindus, swamping others continued to exercise the minds of many Moslems. It was not clear how even a majority could injure the interests of a huge minority like the Moslems, concentrated mostly in certain parts of the country, which would be autonomous. But fear is not reasonable.

Separate electorates for Moslems (and later for other and smaller groups) were introduced and additional seats were given to them in excess of their population. But even excess in representation in a popular assembly could not convert a minority into a majority. Indeed separate electorates made matters a little worse, for the protected group for the majority electorate lost interest in it, and there was little occasion for mutual consideration and adjustment which inevitably takes place in a joint electorate when a candidate has to appeal to every group. The Congress went further and declared that if there was any disagreement between the majority and a religious minority on any issue touching the special interests of that majority, it should not be decided by majority votes but should be referred to an impartial judicial tribunal, or even an international tribunal, whose decision should be final.

It is difficult to conceive what greater protection could be given to any religious minority or group under any democratic system. It must be remembered also that in some provinces Moslems were actually in a majority and as the provinces were autonomous, the Moslem majority was more or less free to function as it chose, subject only to certain all-India considerations. In the central government Moslems would also inevitably have an important share. In the Moslem majority provinces this communal-religious problem was reversed, for there protection was demanded by the other minority groups (such as Hindu and Sikh) as against the Moslem majority. Thus in the

Punjab there was a Moslem-Hindu-Sikh triangle. If there was a separate electorate for Moslems, then others claimed special protection for themselves also. Having once introduced separate electorates there was no end to the ramifications and compartments and difficulties that arose from them. Obviously the granting of weightage in representation to one group could only be done at the cost of some other group, which had its representation reduced below its population figures, This produced a fantastic result, especially in Bengal, where, chiefly because of excessive European representation, the seats allotted to the general electorate were absurdly reduced. Thus the intelligentsia of Bengal, which had played such a notable part in Indian politics and the struggle for freedom, suddenly realized that it had a very weak position in the provincial legislature fixed and limited by statute.

The Congress made many mistakes, but these were in relatively minor questioc of approach or tactics. It was obvious that even for purely political reasons the Congress was eager and anxious to bring about a communal solution and thus remove a barrier to progress. There was no such eagerness in the purely communal organizations, for their chief reason for existence was to emphasize the particular demands of their respective groups, and this had led to a certain vested interest in the *status quo* Though predominantly Hindu in membership, the Congress had large numbers of Moslems on its rolls, as well as all other religious groups like Sikhs, Christians, etc. It was thus forced to think in national terms. For it the dominating issue was national freedom and the establishment of an independent democratic state. It realized that in a vast and varied country like India, a simple type of democracy, giving full powers to a majority to curb or overrule minority groups in all matters, was not satisfactory or desirable, even if it could be established. It wanted unity, of course, and took it for granted, but it saw no reason why the richness and variety of India's cultural life should be regimented after a single pattern. Hence a large measure of autonomy was agreed to as well as safeguards for cultural growth and individual and group freedom.

But on two fundamental questions the Congress stood firm : national unity and democracy. These were the foundations on which it had been founded and its very growth for half a century had emphasized these. The Congress organization is certainly one of the most democratic organizations that I know of anywhere in the world, both in theory and practice. Through its tens of thousands of local committees spread out all over the country, it had trained the people in democratic ways and achieved striking success in this. The fact that a dominating and very popular personality like Gandhi was connected with it, did not lessen that essential democracy of the Congress. In times of crises and struggle there was an inevitable tendency to look to the leader for guidance, as in every country, and such crises were frequent. Nothing is more absurd than to call the Congress an authoritarian organization, and it is interesting to note that such charges are usually made by high representatives of British authority, which is the essence of autocracy and authoritarianism in India.

The British Government had also stood in the past, in theory at least, for Indian unity and democracy. It took pride in the fact that its rule had brought about the political unity of India, even though that unity was one of common subjection. It told us further that it was training us in the methods and processes of democracy. But curiously enough its policy has directly led to the denial of both unity and democracy. In August, 1940, the Congress Executive was compelled to declare that the policy of the British Government in India 'is a direct encouragement of and incitement to civil discord and strife.' Responsible spokesmen of the British Government began to tell us openly that perhaps the unity of India might have to be sacrificed in favour of some new arrangement, and that democracy was not suited to India. That was the only answer they had left to India's demand for independence and the establishment of a democratic state. That answer, incidentally, tells us that the British have failed, on their own showing, in the two major objectives they had set themselves in India. It took them a century and a half to realize this.

We failed in finding a solution for the communal problem agreeable to all parties concerned, and certainly we must share the blame as we have to shoulder the consequences for this failure. But how does one get everybody to agree to any important proposition or change ? There are always feudal and reactionary elements who are opposed to all change, and there are those who want political, economic, and social change ; in between these are varying groups. If a small group can exercise a veto on change, then surely there can never be any change. When it is the policy of the ruling power to set up such groups and encourage them, even though they may represent an infinitesimal proportion of the population, then change can only come through successful revolution. It is obvious that there are any number of feudal and reactionary groups in India, some native to the soil and some created and nurtured by the British. In numbers they may be small but they have the backing of the British power.

Among the Moslems various organizations grew up, apart from the Moslem League. One of the older and more important ones was the Jammat-ul-Ulema which consisted of divines and old-fashioned scholars from all over India. Traditional and conservative in its general outlook, and necessarily religious, it was yet politically advanced and anti-imperialist. On the political plane it often co-operated with the Congress and many of its members were also members of the Congress and functioned through its organization. The Ahrar organization was founded later and was strongest in the Punjab. This represented chiefly lower middle-class Moslems and had considerable influence on the masses also in particular areas. The Momins (principally the weaver class), though large in numbers, were the poorest and most backward among the Moslems and were weak and badly organized. They were friendly to the Congress and opposed to the Moslem League. Being weak they avoided political action. In Bengal there was the Krishak (peasant) Sabha. Both the Jamiat-ul Ulema and the Ahrars often co-operated with the Congress in its normal work and its more aggressive campaigns against the British Government, and suffered for it. The chief Moslem organization which has never come into conflict, other than verbal, with the British

authorities, is the Moslem League, which throughout subsequent changes and developments and even when large numbers joined it, never shed its upper class feudal leadership.

There were also the Shia Moslems organized separately, but rather vaguely, chiefly for the purpose of making political demands. In the early days of Islam, in Arabia, a bitter dispute about the succession to the Khilafat led to a schism and two groups or sects emerged—the Sunnis and Shias. That quarrel perpetuated itself and still separates the two, though the schism ceased to have any political meaning. Sunnis are in a majority in India and in the Islamic countries, except in Iran, where Shias are in a majority. Religious conflicts have sometimes taken place between the two groups. The Shia organization in India as such kept apart and differed from the Moslem League. It was in favour of joint electorate for all But there are many prominent Shias in the League.

All these Moslem organizations, as well as some others (but not including the Moslem League) joined hands to promote the Azad Muslim Conference, which was a kind of joint Moslem front opposed to the Moslem League. This conference held a very representative and successful first session in Delhi in 1940.

The chief Hindu communal organization is the Hindu Mahasabha, the counterpart of the Moslem League, but relatively less important. It is as aggressively communal as the League, but it tries to cover up its extreme narrowness of outlook by using some kind of vague national terminology, though its outlook is more revivalist than progressive It is peculiarly unfortunate in some of its leaders who indulge in irresponsible and violent diatribes, as indeed do some of the Moslem League leaders also. This verbal warfare, indulged in on both sides, is a constant irritant. It takes the place of action.

The Moslem League's communal attitude was often difficult and unreasonable in the past, but no less unreasonable was the attitude of the Hindu Mahasabha. The Hindu minorities in the

Punjab and Sind, and the dominant Sikh group in the Punjab, were often obstructive and came in the way of a settlement. British policy was to encourage and emphasize these differences and to give importance to communal organizations as against the Congress.

One test of the importance of a group or party, or at any rate of its hold on the people, is an election. During the general elections in India in 1937 the Hindu Mahasabha failed completely ; it was nowhere in the picture. The Moslem League did better but on the whole its showing was poor, especially in the predominantly Moslem provinces. In the Punjab and Sind it failed completely, in Bengal it met with only partial success. In the North-West Frontier Province Congress formed a ministry later. In the Moslem minority provinces, the League met with greater success on the whole, but there were also independent Moslem groups as well as Moslems elected as Congressmen.

Then began a remarkable campaign on behalf of the Moslem League against the Congress governments in the provinces and the Congress organization itself. Day after day it was repeated that the governments were committing 'atrocities' on the Moslems. The governments contained Moslem ministers also but they were not members of the Moslem League. What these 'atrocities' were it was not usually stated, or some petty local incidents, which had nothing to do with the government, were distorted and magnified. Some minor errors of some department, which were soon rectified, became 'atrocities'. Sometimes entirely false and baseless charges were made. Even a report was issued, fantastic in its contents and having little to do with any facts. Congress governments invited those who made the charges to supply particulars for investigation or to come and inquire themselves with government help. No one took advantage of these offers. But the campaign continued unchecked. Early in 1940, soon after the resignation of the Congress ministers, the then Congress president, Dr. Rajendra Prasad wrote to Mr. M. A. Jinnah and also made a public statement inviting the Moslem League to place any charges against the Congress governments before the federal

court of inquiry and decision. Mr. Jinnah declined this offer and referred to the possibility of a Royal Commission being appointed for the purpose. There was no question of any such commission being appointed and only the British Government could do so. Some of the British governors, who had functioned during the regime of the Congress governments declared publicity that they had found nothing objectionable in the treatment of minorities. Under the Act of 1935 they had been especially empowered to protect minorities if any such need arose.

I had made a close study of nazi methods of propaganda since Hitler's rise to power and I was astonished to find something very similar taking place in India. A year later, in 193`, when Czechoslovakia had to face the Sudetenland crisis, the nazi methods employed there were studied and referred to with approval by Moslem League spokesmen. A comparison was drawn between the position of Sudetenland Germans and Indian Moslems. Violence and incitements in speeches and in some newspapers became marked. A Congress Moslem minister was stabbed and there was no condemnation of this from any Moslem League leader ; in fact it was condoned. Other exhibitions of violence frequently took place.

I was terribly depressed by these developments and by the general lowering of the standards of public life. Violence, vulgarity, and irresponsibility were on the increase, and it appeared that they were approved of by responsible leaders of the Moslem League. I wrote to some of these leaders and begged them to check this tendency but with no success. So far as the Congress governments were concerned, it was obviously to their interest to win over every minority or other group and they tried hard to do so. Indeed complaints arose from some quarters that they were showing undue favour to the Moslems at the expense of other groups. But it was not a question of a particular grievance which could be remedied, or a reasonable consideration of any matter. There was a regular campaign on the part of members or sympathisers of the Moslem League to make the Moslem masses believe that something terrible was happening and the Congress was to

blame. What that terrible thing was nobody seemed to know. But surely there must be something behind all this shouting and cursing, if not here then elsewhere. During by-elections the cry raised was 'Islam in danger' and voters were asked to take their oaths on the holy book to vote for the Moslem Leauge candidate.

All this had an undoubted effect on the Moslem masses. And yet it is surprising how many resisted it. The League won most by-elections, lost some ; even when they won, there was a substantial minority of Moslem voters who went against them, being influenced more by the Congress agrarian programme. But for the first time in its history the Moslem League got a mass backing and began to develop into a mass organization. Much as I regretted what was happening, I welcomed this development in a way as I thought that it might lead ultimately to a change in the feudal leadership and that more progressive elements would come forward. The real difficulty thus far had been the extreme political and social backwardness of the Moslems which made them liable to exploitation by reactionary leaders.

Mr. M A. Jinnah himself was more advanced than most of his colleagues of the Moslem League. Indeed he stood head and shoulders above them and had therefore become the indispensable leader. From public platforms he confessed his great dissatisfaction with the opportunism, and sometimes even worse failings, of his colleagues. He knew well that a great part of the advanced, selfless, and courageous element among the Moslems had joined and worked with the Congress. And yet some destiny or course of events had thrown him among the very people for whom he had no respect. He was their leader but he could only keep them together by becoming himself a prisoner to their reactionary ideologies. Not that he was an unwilling prisoner, so far as the ideologies were concerned, for despite his external modernism, he belonged to an older generation which was hardly aware of modern political thought or development. Of economies, which overshadow the world to-day, he appeared to be entirely ignorant. The extraordinary occurrences that had taken place all over the

world since World War I had apparently had no effect on him. He had left the Congress when the organization had taken a political leap forward. The gap had widened as the Congress developed an economic and mass outlook. But Mr. Jinnah seemed to have remained ideologically in that identical place where he stood a generation ago, or rather he had gone further back for now he condemned both India's unity and democracy. 'They would not live,' he has stated, 'under any system of government that was based on the nonsensical notion of western democracy. It took him a long time to realize that what he had stood for throughout a fairly long life was nonsensical.

Mr. Jinnah is a lone figure even in the Moslem League, keeping apart from his closest co-workers, widely but distantly respected, more feared than liked. About his ability as a politician there is no doubt, but somehow that ability is tied up with the peculiar conditions of British rule in India to-day. He shines as a lawyer-politician, as a tactician, as one who thinks that he holds the balance between nationalist India and the British power. If conditions were different and he had to face real problems, political, and economic, it is difficult to say how far his ability would carry him. Perhaps he is himself doubtful of this, although he has no small opinion of himself. This may be an explanation for that subconscious urge in him against change, to keep things going as they are, and to avoid discussion and the calm consideration of problems with people who do not wholly agree with him. He fits into this present pattern whether he or anybody else will fit into a new pattern it is difficult to say. What passion moves him, what objective does he strive for ? Or is it that he has no dominating passion except the pleasure he has in playing a fascinating political game of chess in which he often has an opportunity to say 'check' ? He seems to have a hatred for the Congress which has grown with the years. His aversions and dislikes are obvious, but what does he like ? With all his strength and tenacity, he is a strangely negative person whose appropriate symbol might well be a 'no'. Hence all attempts to understand his positive aspect fail and one cannot come to grips with it.

Since British rule came to India, Moslems have produced few outstanding figures of the modern type. They have produced some remarkable men but, as a rule, these represented the continuation of the old culture and tradition and did not easily fit in with modern developments. This incapacity to march with the changing times and adapt themselves culturally and otherwise to a new environment was not of course due to any innate failing. It derived from certain historical causes, from the delay in the development of a new industrial middle class, and the excessively feudal background of the Moslems, which blocked up avenues of development and prevented the release of talent. In Bengal the backwardness of the Moslems was most marked, but this was obviously due to two causes: the destruction of their upper classes during the early days of British rule, and the fact that the vast majority were converts from the lowest class of Hindus, who had long been denied opportunities of growth and progress. In northern India the cultured upper-class Moslems were tied up with their old traditional ways as well as the land system. In recent years there has been a marked change and a fairly rapid development of a new middle class among Indian Moslems, but even now they lag far behind Hindus and others in science and industry. The Hindus are backward also, sometimes even more hide-bound and tied up with traditional ways of thought and practice than the Moslems, but nevertheless they have produced some very eminent men in science, industry, and other fields. The small Parsee community has also produced outstanding leaders of modern industry. Mr. Jinnah's family, it is interesting to note, was originally Hindu.

Both among Hindus and Moslems a good deal of talent and ability has in the past gone into government service, as that was the most attractive avenue open. With the growth of the political movement for freedom, that attraction became less, and able, earnest, and courageous persons were drawn into the Congress. Thus many of the best types of Moslems came into it. In more recent years young Moslems joined the socialist and communist parties also. Apart from all these ardent and progressive persons, Moslems were very poor in the quality of their leaders and were inclined to look to government service

alone for advancement. Mr. Jinnah was a different type. He was able, tenacious, and not open to the lure of office, which had been such a failing of so many others. His position in the Moslem League, therefore, became unique and he was able to command the respect which was denied to many others prominent in the League. Unfortunately his tenacity prevented him from opening his mind to any new ideas, and his unquestioned hold on his own organization made him intolerant both of his own dissidents and of other organizations. He became the Moslem League. But a question arose : As the League was becoming a mass organization, how long could this feudal leadership with outmoded ideas continue ?

When I was Congress president, I wrote to Mr. Jinnah on several occasions and requested him to tell us exactly what he would like us to do. I asked him what the League wanted and what its definite objectives were. I also wanted to know what the grievances of the League were against the Congress governments. The idea was that we might clarify matters by correspondence and then discuss personally the important points that had arisen in it. Mr. Jinnah sent me long replies but failed to enlighten me. It was extraordinary how he avoided telling me, or anyone else, exactly what he wanted or what the grievances of the League were. Repeatedly we exchanged letters and yet always there was the same vagueness and inconlusiveness and I could get nothing definite. This surprised me very much and made me feel a little helpless. It seemed as if Mr. Jinnah did not want to commit himself in any way and was not at all eager for a settlement.

Subsequently Gandhiji and others amongst us met Mr. Jinnah several times. They talked for hours but never got beyond a preliminary stage. Our proposal was that representatives of the Congress and the League should meet and discuss all their mutual problems. Mr. Jinnah said that this could only be done after we recognized publicly that the Moslem League was the sole representative organization of the Moslems of India, and the Congress should consider itself a purely Hindu organization. This created an obvious difficulty. We recognized of course the importance of the League and because

of that we had approached it. But how could we ignore many other Moslem organizations in the country, some closely associated with us? Also there were large numbers of Moslems in the Congress itself and in our highest executive. To admit Mr. Jinnah's claim meant in effect to push out our old Moslem colleagues from the Congress and declare that the Congress was not open to them. It was to change the fundamental character of the Congress, and from a national organization, open to all, convert it into a communal body. That was inconceivable for us. If the Congress had not already been there, we would have had to build up a new national organization open to every Indian.

We could not understand Mr. Jinnah's insistence on this and refusal to discuss any other matter. Again we could only conclude that he did not want any settlement, nor did he want to commit himself in any way. He was satisfied in letting matters drift and in expecting that he could get more out of the British Government this way.

Mr. Jinnah's demand was based on a new theory he had recently propounded—that India consisted of two nations, Hindu and Moslem Why only two I do not know, for if nationality was based on religion, then there were many nations in India. Of two brothers one may be a Hindu, another a Moslem; they would belong to two different nations. These two nations existed in varying proportions in most of the villages of India They were nations which had no boundaries; they overlapped. A Bengali Moslem and a Bengali Hindu living together, speaking the same language, and having much the same traditions and customs, belonged to different nations. All this was very difficult to grasp; it seemed a reversion to some medieval theory. What a nation is, it is difficult to define. Possibly the essential characteristic of national consciousness is a sense of belonging together and of together facing the rest of mankind. How far that is present in India as a whole may be a debatable point. It may even be said that India developed in the past as a multinational state and gradually acquired a national consciousness. But all these are theoretical abstractions which hardly concern us. To-day

the most powerful states are multi-national, but at the same time developing a national consciousness, like the U.S.A. or the U.S.S.R.

From Mr. Jinnah's two-nation theory developed the conception of Pakistan, or splitting up of India. That, of course, did not solve the problem of the 'two nations', for they were all over the place. But that gave body to a metaphysical conception. This again gave rise to a passionate reaction among many in favour of the unity of India. Ordinarily national unity is taken for granted. Only when it is challenged or attacked, or attempts are made to disrupt it, is unity really appreciated, and a positive reaction to maintain it takes place. Thus sometimes attempts at disruption actually held to weld that unity.

There was a fundamental difference between the outlook of the Congress and that of the religious-communal organizations. Of the latter the chief were the Moslem League and its Hindu counterpart, the Hindu Mahasabha. These communal organizations, while in theory standing for India's independence, were more interested in claiming protection and special privileges for their respective groups. They had thus inevitably to look to the British Government for such privileges, and this led them to avoid conflict with it. The Congress outlook was so tied up with India's freedom as a united nation that everything else was secondary, and this meant ceaseless conflict or friction with the British power. Indian nationalism, as represented by the Congress, opposed British imperialism. The Congress had further developed agrarian, economic, and social programmes. Neither the Moslem League nor the Hindu Mahasabha had ever considered any such question or attempted to frame a programme. Socialists and communists were, of course, intensely interested in such matters and had their own programmes, which they tried to push in the Congress as well as outside.

There was yet another marked difference between Congress policy and work and those of the religious-communal organizations. Quite apart from its agitational side and its legislative activity, when such existed, the Congress laid the greatest stress on certain constructive activities among the masses. These

activities consisted in organizing and developing cottage industries, in raising the depressed classes, and later in the spread of basic education. Village work also included sanitation and some simple forms of medical relief. Separate organizations for carrying on these activities were created by the Congress, which functioned apart from the political plane, and which absorbed thousands of whole-time workers and a much larger number of part-time helpers. This quiet non-political, constructive work was carried on even when political activities were at a low ebb ; but even this was suppressed by Government when there was open conflict with the Congress. The economic value of some of these activities was questioned by a few people, but there could be no doubt of their social importance. They trained a large body of whole-time workers in intimate touch with the masses, and produced a spirit of self-help and self-reliance among the people. Congressmen and women also played an important part in trade union and agrarian organizations, actually building up many of these. The largest and best-organized trade union—that of the Ahmedabad textile industry—was started by Congressmen and worked in close co-operation with them.

All these activities gave a solid background to Congress work, which was completely lacking in the religious-communal organizations. These latter functioned on the agitational place only by fits and starts, or during elections. In them also was lacking that ever-present sense of risk and personal danger from government action which Congressmen had almost always to face. Thus, there was a far greater tendency for careerists and opportunists to enter these organizations The two Moslem organizations, the Ahrars and the Jamiat ul-Ulema, however, suffered greatly from governmental repression because politically they often followed the same line as the Congress.

The Congress represented not only the nationalist urge of India, which had grown with the growth of the new bourgeoisie, but also, to a large extent, proletarian urges for social change. In particular, it stood for revolutionary agrarian changes. This sometimes produced inner conflicts within the Congress, and the landlord class and the big industrialists, though often

nationalistic, kept aloof from it for fear of socialistic changes. Within the Congress, socialists and communists found a place and could influence Congress policy. The communal organizations, whether Hindu or Moslem, were closely associated with the feudal and conservative elements and were opposed to any revolutionary social change. The real conflict had, therefore, nothing to do with religion, though religion often masked the issue, but was essentially between those who stood for a nationalist—democratic—socially revolutionary policy and those who were concerned with preserving the relics of a feudal regime. In a crisis, the latter inevitably depend upon foreign support which is interested in preserving the *status quo.*

The beginning of World War II brought an internal crisis which resulted in the resignation of the Congress governments in the provinces. Before this occurred, however, the Congress made another attempt to approach Mr. M.A. Jinnah and the Moslem League. Mr. Jinnah was invited to attend the first meeting of the Congress Executive after the commencement of the war. He was unable to join us. We met him later and tried to evolve a common policy in view of the world crisis. Not much progress was made but nevertheless we decided to continue our talks. Meanwhile the Congress governments resigned on the political issue which had nothing to do with the Moslem League and the communal problem. Mr. Jinnah, however, chose that moment for a fierce attack on the Congress and a call on his League for the observance of a 'Day of Deliverance' from Congress rule in the provinces. He followed this up by very unbecoming remarks on Nationalist Moslems in the Congress and especially on the Congress president, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, who was greatly respected among Hindus and Moslems alike. The 'Day of Deliverance' was rather a flop and counter demonstrations among Moslems took place in some parts of India. But it added to bitterness and confirmed the conviction that Mr. Jinnah and the Moslem League under his leadership had no intention whatever of coming to any settlement with

the Congress, or of advancing the cause of Indian freedom. They preferred the existing situation.*

INDIA : PARTITION OR STRONG NATIONAL STATE OR CENTRE OF SUPRA-NATIONAL STATE ?**

It is difficult to discover a just balance between one's hopes and fears or to prevent one's wishes colouring the thinking of one's mind. Our desires seek out supporting reasons and tend to ignore facts and arguments that do not fit in with them. I try to reach that balance so that I may be able to judge correctly and find out the true basis for action, and yet I know how far I am from success and how I cannot get rid of the multitude of thoughts and feelings which have gone to build me up and to fence me in with their invisible bars. So also others may err in different directions. An Indian's and an Englishman's view of India and her place in the world will inevitably diverge and differ, conditional as each is on a different individual and national past. The individual and the national group fashion their own destiny by their actions; these past actions lead to the present and what they do to-day forms the basis of their tomorrows. *Karma*, they have called this in India, the law of cause and effect, the destiny which our past activities create for us. It is not an invariable destiny and many other factors go to influence it, and the individual's will is itself supposed to have some play. If this freedom to vary the results of past action were not present, then indeed we would all be mere robots in the iron grip of an unavoidable fate. Yet that past *Karma* is a powerful factor in shaping the individual and the nation, and nationalism itself is a shadow of it with all its good and bad memories of the past.

*After I had finished writing this book, I read a book by a Canadian scholar, Wilfred Cantwell Smith, who has spent some years in Egypt and India. This book, which is called 'Modern Islam in India—A Social Analysis' (Lahore, 1943), is an able analysis and careful survey of the development of ideas among Indian Moslems since the Indian Mutiny of 1857. He deals with the progressive and reactionary movements from Sir Syed Ahmad Khan's time onwards, and the different phases of the Moslem League.

**From Nehru's *The Discovery of India*, Chapter 10.

Perhaps, this past inheritance influences the national group even more than the individual, for large numbers of human beings are driven more by unconscious and impersonal urges than the individual, and it is more difficult to divert them from their course. Moral considerations may influence an individual, but their effect on a group is far less, and the larger the group the less is their effect on it. And it is easier, especially in the modern world, to influence the group by insidious propaganda. And yet sometimes, though rarely, the group itself rises to a height of moral behaviour, forcing the individual to forget his narrow and selfish ways. More often the group falls far below the individual standard.

War produces both these reactions, but the dominant tendency is a release from moral responsibility and the collapse of the standards that civilization has so laboriously built up. Successful war and aggression lead to a justification and continuance of this policy, to imperialist domination and ideas of a master race. Defeat results in frustration and the nursing of feelings of revenge. In either event, hatred and the habit of violence grow. There is ruthlessness and brutality, and a refusal even to try to understand the other's viewpoint. And thus the future is conditioned and more wars and conflicts follow with all their attendant consequences.

The last 200 years of enforced relationship between India and England have built up this *Karma*, this destiny, for both of them, and it continues to govern their relations to each other. Entangled in its meshes, we have thus far struggled in vain to rid ourselves of this past inheritance and start afresh on a different basis. The last five years of war have unhappily added to that past evil *Karma* and made reconciliation and a normal relationship more difficult. That record of 200 years, like all else, is a mixture of good and evil. To the Englishman the good outweighs the evil, to the Indian the evil is so overwhelming that it darkens the whole period. But whatever the balance of good and evil there might be, it is obvious that any relationship that is enforced produces hatred and a bitter dislike of each other, and out of these feelings only evil consequences can flow.

A revolutionary change, both political and economic, is not only needed in India but would appear to be inevitable. At the end of 1939, soon after the war started, and again in April, 1942, there seemed to be a faint possibility of such a change taking place by consent between India and England. But those possibilities and opportunities passed because every basic change was feared. But the change will come. Has the stage of consent passed ? In the presence of common perils the past loses some of its obsessions and the present in viewed in terms of the future. Now the past has returned and has been grievously added to. The receptive mood has changed and become hard and bitter. Some settlement will come sooner or later, after more conflict or without it, but it is far less likely to be real, sincere, and co-operative. More probably it will be an unwilling submission on both sides to overriding circumstances with continuing ill-will and distrust. No attempted solution which assumes even in principle the retention of India as part of the British empire has the slightest chance of acceptance of adoption. No solution which retains feudal relics in India can possibly last.

Life is cheap in India and when this is so, life is empty and ugly and shoddy and all the horrid brood of poverty envelop it. There is an enervating atmosphere in India, due to many causes, imposed or inherent, but essentially the resultant of poverty and want. We have a terribly low standard of living and a very high rate of dying. Industrially developed and rich countries have a way of looking at undeveloped and poor countries just as the rich man looks on the poor and unfortunate. The rich man, out of his abundant resources and opportunities, develops high standards and fastidious tastes and blames the poor for their habits and lack of culture. Having denied them the opportunity to better themselves, he makes their poverty and its attendant evils justifications for a further denial.

India is not a poor country. She is abundantly supplied with everything that makes a country rich, and yet her people are very poor. Sne has a noble heritage of culture-forms and her culture-potential is very great ; but many new developments and the accessories of culture are lacking. This lack is due to many

causes and largely to deliberate deprivation. When this is so, the vital energy of the people must overcome the obstacles in the way and fill the lack. That is happening in India to-day. Nothing can be clearer than the fact that India has the resources as well as the intelligence, skill, and capacity to advance rapidly. She has the accumulated cultural and spiritual experience of ages behind her. She can progress both in scientific theory and the applications of science and become a great industrial nation. Her scientific record is already noteworthy, in spite of the many limitations she suffers from and the lack of opportunity for her young men and women to do scientific work. That record is not great considering the size and possibilities of the country, but it is significant of what will happen when the energies of the nation are released and opportunities are provided.

Only two factors may come in the way : international developments and external pressure on India, and lack of a common objective within the country. Ultimately it is the latter alone that will count. If India is split up into two or more parts and can no longer function as a political and economic unit, her progress will be seriously affected. There will be the direct weakening effect, but much worse will be the inner psychological conflict between those who wish to reunite her and those who oppose this New vested interests will be created which will resist change and progress, a new evil *Karma* will pursue us in the future. One wrong step leads to another ; so it has been in the past and so it may be in the future. And yet wrong steps have to be taken sometimes lest some worse peril befall us ; that is the great paradox of politics, and no man can say with surety whether present wrong-doing is better and safer in the end than the possibility of that imagined peril. Unity is always better than disunity, but an enforced unity is a sham and dangerous affair, full of explosive possibilities. Unity must be of the mind and heart, a sense of belonging together and of facing together those who attack it. I am convinced that there is that basic unity in India, but it has been overlaid and hidden to some extent by other forces. These latter may be temporary and artificial and may pass off, but they count to-day and no man can ignore them.

It is our fault, of course, and we must suffer for our failings. But I cannot excuse or forgive the British authorities for the deliberate part they have played in creating disruption in India. All other injuries will pass, but this will continue to plague us for a much longer period. Often I am reminded of Ireland and China when I think of India. Both differ from India and from each other in their past and present problems, and yet there are many similarities. Shall we have to tread that same path in the future ?

Jim Phelan in his 'Jail Journey' tells us of the effect of jail on human character, and everyone who has spent a long time in prison knows how true his statement is : 'The jail...acts as a magnifying glass on human character. Every tiny weakness is brought out, emphasized, wakened, until presently there is no more of the convict with the weakness but only a weakness wearing convict clothes.' Some such effect is produced on national character by foreign rule. That is not the only effect, for noble qualities also develop and strength is gradually built up through resistance. But foreign authority encourages the former and tries to suppress the latter. Just as we have convict warders in prison whose chief qualification is to spy on their fellow convicts, so in a subject country there is no lack of puppets and sycophants who put on the livery of authority and act on its behalf. There are others also who do not consciously line up in this way but who are nevertheless influenced by the policies and intrigues of the dominant power.

To accept the principle of a division of India, or rather the principle that there should be no enforced unity, may lead to a calm and dispassionate consideration of its consequences and thus to a realization that unity is in the interest of all. Yet obviously there is the danger that once this wrong step is taken, other like ones may follow in its train. The attempt to solve one problem in the wrong way may well create new problems. If India is to be divided into two or more parts, then the amalgamation of the major Indian states into India becomes more difficult, for those states will find an additional reason, which

they might not otherwise have, for keeping aloof and holding on to their authoritarian regimes.*

*It may be said that the Indian States as a whole, while anxious to maintain their internal autonomy, are equally desirous of having a strong federal India of which they are members with equal rights. The proposal to divide India has been vigorously opposed by some of the leading ministers and statesmen of the states, and they have made it clear that, if such a division takes place, the states might well prefer to keep to themselves and not tie up with either part of divided India. Sir C P. Ramaswami Aiyar, the Dewan of Travancore and one of the most experienced of states' minister (though with a reputation for autocratic methods and a supression of those of whom he does not approve) is a strong advocate of the internal autonomy of the states. He is at the same time an aggressive and persistent opponent of 'Pakistan', or any other suggested division. In an address delivered on October 6th, 1944, before the Bombay branch of the Indian Council of World Affairs, he said : 'The states, in other words, should, and in my view would, come into a scheme whereby the various political and administrative units in India, while exercising a full measure of autonomy in local matters, would co-operate with other units in the composition and working of the central legislative and executive organizations. Such organization will function effectively within and without the limits of India as national and co-ordinating as well as representative bodies. Within the limits of India the relationship between the units will be one of equality and there will be no question of paramountcy as such inter se, though the rights residual and otherwise of the centre will have to be firmly established and implemented.' He further says . 'My point is this, namely, that treaty rights or no treaty rights, no Indian state has a right to exist which does not come into any scheme by which there is created a central direction or central control of matters that appertain to the Indian states and British India alike, or which does not loyally conform to all political arrangements that may be arrived at for the governance of India and all ideologies that may be evolved as the result of free and equal discussion and resultant compromises.' 'I wish to emphasize strongly, though I know I shall evoke a certain amount of controversy, that no Indian state has the right to exist unless it is abreast of, if not ahead of, British India in things that matter in retation to the well-being of the people.'

Another fact that Ramaswami Aiyar emphasizes is that there is no getting away from the fact that it is impossible to deal with 601 states on an equal footing. He thinks that in a new constitution for India these, 601 states will have to be reduced to something like fifteen or twenty the others being absorbed into the larger units, province or state.

Ramaswami Aiyar apparently does not attach very much importance to this internal political progress of the states, or at any rate considers

backward, and often deficit, areas which cannot exist without a great deal of outside assistance. Thus the odd fact emerges that those who to-day demand separation will be the greatest sufferers from it. Because of a partial realization of this fact, it is now stated on their behalf that separation should take place in such a way as to give them an economically balanced region. Whether this is possible under any circumstances I do not know, but I rather doubt it. In any event any such attempt means forcibly attaching other large areas with a predominantly Hindu and Sikh population to the separated area. That would be a curious way of giving effect to the principle of self-determination. I am reminded of the story of the man who killed his father and mother and then threw himself on the mercy of the court as an orphan.

Another very curious contradiction emerges. While the principle of self-determination is invoked, the idea of a plebiscite to decide this is not accepted, or at most, it is said that the plebiscite should be limited to Moslems only in the area. Thus in Bengal and the Punjab the Moslem population is about 54 per cent or less. It is suggested that if there is to be voting only this 54 per cent should vote and decide the fate of the remaining 46 per cent or more, who will have no say in the matter. This might result in 28 per cent deciding the fate of the remaining 72 per cent.

It is difficult to understand how any reasonable person can advance these propositions or expect them to be agreed to. I do not know, and nobody can know till an actual vote takes place on this issue, how many Muslems in the areas concerned would vote for partition. I imagine that a large number of them, possibly even a majority, would vote against it. Many Moslem organizations are opposed to it. Every non-Moslem, whether he is a Hindu, or Sikh, or Christian, or Parsee, is opposed to it. Essentially this sentiment in favour of partition has grown in the areas where Moslems are in a small minority —areas which, in any event, would remain undetached from the rest of India. Moslems in provinces where they are in a majority have been less influenced by it; naturally, for they can stand on their own feet and have no reason to fear other

groups. It is least in evidence in the North-West Frontier Province (95 per cent Moslem), where the Pathans are brave and self-reliant and have no fear complex. Thus, oddly enough, the Moslem League's proposal to partition India finds far less response in the Moslem areas sought to be partitioned than in the Moslem minority areas which are unaffected by it. Yet the fact remains that considerable numbers of Moslems have become sentimentally attached to this idea of separation without giving thought to its consequences. Indeed, the proposition has so far only been vaguely stated and no attempt has been made to define it, in spite of repeated requests.

I think this sentiment has been artificially created and has no roots in the Moslem mind. But even a temporary sentiment may be strong enough to influence events and create a new situation. Normally, adjustments would take place from time to time, but in the peculiar position in which India is situated to-day, with power concentrated in foreign hands, anything may happen. It is clear that any real settlement must be based on the goodwill of the constituent elements and on the desire of all parties to it to co-operate together for a common objective. In order to gain that any sacrifice in reason is worth while. Every group must not only be theoretically and actually free and have equal opportunities of growth, but should have the sensation of freedom and equality. It is not difficult, if passions and unreasoning emotions are set aside, to devise such freedom with the largest autonomy for provinces and states and yet a strong central bond. There could even be autonomous units within the larger provinces or states, as in Soviet Russia. In addition to this, every conceivable protection and safeguard for minority rights could be inserted into the constitution.

All this can be done, and yet I do not know how the future will take shape under the influence of various inderminate factors and forces, the chief of these being British policy. It may be that some division of India is enforced, with some tenuous bond joining the divided parts. Even if this happens, I am convinced that the basic feeling of unity and world developments will later bring the divided parts nearer to each other and result in a real unity.

That unity is geographical, historical, and cultural, and all that ; but the most powerful factor in its favour is the trend of world events. Many of us are of opinion that India is essentially a nation ; Mr. Jinnah has advanced a two-nation theory and has lately added to it and to political phraseology by describing some religious groups as sub-nations, whatever these might be. His thought identifies a nation with religion. That is not the usual approach to-day. But whether India is properly to be described as one nation or two or more really does not matter, for the modern idea of nationality has been almost divorced from statehood. The national state is too small a unit to-day and small states can have no independent existence. It is doubtful if even many of the larger national states can have any real independence. The national state is thus giving place to the multi-national state or to large federations. The Soviet Union is typical of this development. The United States of America, though bound together by strong national ties, constitute essentially a multi-national state. Behind Hitler's march across Europe there was something more than the nazi lust for conquest. New forces were working towards the liquidation of the small states system in Europe. Hitler's armies are now rapidly rolling back or are being destroyed, but the conception of large federations remains.

Mr. H.G. Wells has been telling the world, with all the fire of an old prophet, that humanity is at the end of an age—an age of fragmentation in the management of its affairs, fragmentation politically among separate sovereign states and economically among unrestricted business organizations competing for profit. He tells us that it is the system of nationality individualism and unco-ordinated enterprise that is the world's disease. We shall have to put an end to the national state and devise a collectivism which neither degrades nor enslaves. The prophets are ignored and sometimes even stoned by their generation. And so Mr. Wells' warnings, and those of many others, are voices in the wilderness so far as those in authority are concerned. Nevertheless, they point to inevitable trends. These trends can be hastened or delayed, or if those who have power are so blind, may even have to wait another and greater disaster before they take actual shape.

In India, as elsewhere, we are too much under the bondage of slogans and set phrases derived from past events, and ideologies which have little relevance to-day, and their chief function is to prevent reasoned thought and a dispassionate consideration of the situation as it exists. There is also the tendency towards abstractions and vague ideals, which arouse emotional responses and are often good in their way, but which also lead to a woolliness of the mind and unreality. In recent years a great deal has been written and said on the future of India, and especially on the partition or unity of India ; and yet the astonishing fact remains that those who propose 'Pakistan' or partition have consistently refused to define what they mean or to consider the implications of such a division. They move on the emotional plane only, as also many of those who oppose them, a plane of imagination and vague desire, behind which lie imagined interests. Inevitably, between these two emotional and imaginative approaches there is no meeting ground. And so 'Pakistan' and 'Akhand Hindustan' (undivided India) are bandied about and hurled at each other. It is clear that group emotions and conscious or subconscious urges count and must be attended to. It is at least equally clear that facts and realities do not vanish by our ignoring them or covering them up by a film of emotion ; they have a way of emerging at awkward moments and in unexpected ways. And decisions taken primarily on the basis of emotions, or when emotions are the dominating consideration, are likely to be wrong and to lead to dangerous developments.

It is obvious that whatever may be the future of India, and even if there is a regular partition, the different parts of India will have to co-operate with each other in a hundred different ways. Even independent nations have to co-operate with each other, much more so must Indian provinces or such parts as emerge from a partition, for these stand in a intimate relationship to each other and must hang together or deteriorate, disintegrate, and lose their freedom. Thus the very first practical question is : What are the essential common bonds which must bind and cement various parts of India if she is to progress and remain free, and which are equally necessary even for the autonomy and cultural growth of those parts. Defence is an obvious

and outstanding consideration, and behind that defence lie the industries feeding it, transport and communications, and some measure at least of economic planning. Customs, currency, and exchange also, and the maintenance of the whole of India as an internally free-trade area, for any internal tariff barriers would be fatal barriers to growth. And so on ; there are many others matters which would inevitably, both from the point of view of the whole and the parts, have to be jointly and centrally directed. There is no getting away from it whether we are in favour of Pakistan or not, unless we are blind to everything except a momentary passion. The vast growth of air services to-day has led to the demand for their internationalization, or to some form of international control. Whether various countries are wise enough to accept this is doubtful, but it is quite certain that air developments can only take place in India on an all-India basis ; it is inconceivable for a partitioned India to make progress in regard to them in each part separately. This applies also to many other activities which already tend to outgrow even national boundaries. India is big enough as a whole to give them scope for development, but not so partitioned India.

Thus we arrive at the inevitable and ineluctable conclusion that, whether Pakistan comes or not, a number of important and basic functions of the state must be exercised on an all-India basis if India is to survive as a free state and progress. The alternative is stagnation, decay, and disintegration, leading to loss of political and economic freedom, both for India as a whole and its various separated parts. As has been said by an eminent authority : 'The inexorable logic of the age presents the country with radically different alternatives : union plus independence or disunion plus dependence.' What form the union is to take, and whether it is called union or by some other name, is not so important, though names have their own significance and psychological value. The essential fact is that a number of varied activities can only be conducted effectively on a joint all-India basis. Probably many of these activities will soon be under the control of international bodies. The world shrinks and its problems overlap. It takes less than three

days now to go right across the world by air, from any one place to another, and to-morrow, with the development of stratosphere navigation, it may take even less time. India must become a great world centre of air travel. India will also be linked by rail to western Asia and Europe on the one side, and to Burma and China on the other. Not far from India, across the Himalayas in the north, lies in Soviet Asia one of the highly developed industrial areas, with an enormous future potential. India will be affected by this and will react in many ways.

The way of approach, therefore, to the problem of unity or Pakistan, is not in the abstract and on the emotional level, but practically, and with our eves on the present-day world. That approach leads up to certain obvious conclusions, that a binding cement in regard to certain important functions and matters is essential for the whole of India. Apart from them there may be and should be the fullest freedom to constituent units, and an intermediate sphere where there is both joint and separate functioning. There may be differences of opinion as to where one sphere ends, and the other begins, but such differences, when considered on a practical basis, are generally fairly easy of adjustment.

But all this must necessarily be based on a spirit of willing co-operation, on the absence of a feeling of compulsion, and on the sensation of freedom in each unit and individual. Old vested interests have to go; it is equally important that no new ones are created. Certain proposals, based on metaphysical conceptions of groups and forgetting the individuals who comprise them, make one individual politically equal to two or three others and thus create new vested interests. Any such arrangement can only lead to grave dissatisfaction and instability.

The right of any well-constituted area to secede from the Indian federation or union has often been put forward, and the argument of the U.S.S.R. advanced in support of it. That argument has little application, for conditions there are wholly different and the right has little practical value. In the

emotional atmosphere in India to-day it may be desirable to agree to this for the future in order to give that sense of freedom from compulsion which is so necessary. The Congress has in effect agreed to it. But even the exercise of that right involves a pre-consideration of all those common problems to which reference has been made. Also there is grave danger in a possibility of partition and division to begin with, for such an attempt might well scotch the very beginnings of freedom and the formation of a free national state. Insuperable problems will rise and confuse all the real issues. Disintegration will be in the air and all manner of groups, who are otherwise agreeable to a joint and unified existence, will claim separate states for themselves, or special privileges which are encroachments on others. The problem of the Indian states will become far more difficult of solution, and the states system, as it is to-day, will get a new lease of life. The social and economic problems will be far harder to tackle. Indeed, it is difficult to conceive of any free state emerging from such a turmoil, and if something does emerge, it will be a pitiful caricature full of contradictions and insoluble problems.

Before any such right of secession is exercised there must be a properly constituted, functioning, free India. It may be possible then, when external influences have been removed and real problems face the country, to consider such questions objectively and in a spirit of relative detachment, far removed from the emotionalism of to-day, which can only lead to unfortunate consequences which we may all have to regret later. Thus it may be desirable to fix a period, say ten years after the establishment of the free Indian state, at the end of which the right to secede may be exercised through proper constitutional process and in accordance with the clearly expressed will of the inhabitants of the area concerned.

Many of us are utterly weary of present conditions in India and are passionately eager to find some way out. Some are even prepared to clutch at any straw that floats their way in the vague hope that it may afford some momentary relief, some breathing space to a system that has long felt strangled and suffocated. That is very natural. And yet there is danger in

these rather hysterical and adventurist approaches to vital problems affecting the well-being of hundreds of millions and the future peace of the world. We live continually on the verge of disaster in India, and indeed the disaster sometimes overwhelms us, as we saw in Bengal and elsewhere in India last year. The Bengal famine, and all that followed it, were not tragic exceptions due to extraordinary and unlooked for causes which could not be controlled or provided for. They were vivid, frightful pictures of India as she is, suffering for generations past from a deep-seated organic disease which has eaten into her very vitals. That disease will take more and more dangerous and disastrous forms unless we divert all our joint energies to its uprooting and cure. A divided India, each part trying to help itself and not caring for, or co-operating with, the rest, will lead to an aggravation of the disease and to sinking into a welter of hopeless, helpless misery. It is terribly late already and we have to make up for lost time. Must even the lesson of the Bengal famine be lost upon us ? There are still many people who can think only in terms of political percentages, of weightage, of balancing, of checks, of the preservation of privileged groups, of making new groups privileged, of preventing other from advancing because they themselves are not anxious to, or are incapable of, doing so, of vested interests, of avoiding major social and economic changes, of holding on to the present picture of India with only superficial alterations. That way lies supreme folly.

The problems of the moment seem big and engross our attention. And yet, in a longer perspective, they may have no great importance and, under the surface of superficial events, more vital forces may be at work. Forgetting present problems then for a while and looking ahead, India emerges as a strong united state, a federation of free units, intimately connected with her neighbours and playing an important part in world affairs. She is one of the very few countries which have the resources and capacity to stand on their own feet. To-day probably the only such countries are the United States of America and the Soviet Union. Great Britain can only be reckoned as one of these if the resources of her empire are

added to her own, and even then a spread-out and disgruntled empire is a source of weakness. China and India are potentially capable of joining that group. Each of them is compact and homogeneous and full of natural wealth, manpower, and human skill and capacity : indeed India's potential industrial resources are probably even more varied and extensive than China's, and so also her exportable commodities which may be required for the imports she needs. No other country, taken singly, apart from these four, is actually or potentially in such a position. It is possible of course that large federations or groups of nations may emerge in Europe or elsewhere and form huge multi-national states.

The Pacific is likely to take the place of the Atlantic in the future as a nerve centre of the world. Though not directly a Pacific state, India will inevitably exercise an miportant influence there. India will also develop as the centre of economic and political activity in the Indian Ocean area, in south-east Asia and right up to the Middle East. Her position gives an economic and strategic importance in a part of the world which is going to develop rapidly in the future. If there is a regional grouping of the countries bordering on the Indian Ocean on either side of India--Iran, Iraq, Afghanistan, India, Ceylon, Burma, Malaya, Siam, Java, etc —present day minority problems will disappear, or at any rate will have to be considered in an entirely different context.

Mr. G.D.H. Cole considers India to be itself a supra-national area, and he thinks that in the long run she is destined to be the centre of a mighty supra-national state covering the whole of the Middle East and lying between a Sino-Japanese Soviet Republic, a new state based on Egypt, Arabia, and Turkey, and the Soviet Union in the north. All this is pure conjecture and whether any such development will ever take place no man can say. For my part I have no liking for a division of the world into a few huge supra-national areas, unless these are tied together by some strong world bond. But if people are foolish enough to avoid world unity and some world organization, then these vast supra-national regions, each functioning as one huge state but with local autonomy, are

very likely to take shape. For the small national state is doomed. It may survive as a culturally autonomous area but not as an independent political unit.

Whatever happens it will be well for the world if India can make her influence felt. For that influence will always be in favour of peace and co-operation and against aggression.

A TRYST WITH DESTINY*

Long years ago we made a tryst with destiny, and now the time comes when we shall redeem our pledge, not wholly or in full measure, but very substantially. At the stroke of the midnight hour, when the world sleeps, India will awake to life and freedom. A moment comes, which comes but rarely in history, when we step out from the old to the new, when an age ends, and when the soul of a nation, long suppressed, finds utterance. It is fitting that at this solemn moment we take the pledge of dedication to the service of India and her people and to the still larger cause of humanity.

At the dawn of history India started on her unending quest, and trackless centuries are filled with her striving and the grandeur of her success and her failures. Through good and ill fortune alike she has never lost sight of that quest or forgotten the ideals which gave her strength. We end today a period of ill fortune and India discovers herself again. The achievement we celebrate today is but a step, an opening of opportunity, to the greater triumphs and achievements that await us. Are we brave enough and wise enough to grasp this opportunity and accept the challenge of the future ?

Freedom and power bring responsibility. The responsibility rests upon this Assembly, a sovereign body representing the sovereign people of India. Before the birth of freedom we have endured all the pains of labour and our hearts are heavy with the memory of this sorrow. Some of those pains continue even now. Nevertheless, the past is over and it is the future that beckons to us now.

*Speech delivered by Nehru in the Constituent Assembly, August 14, 1947, on the eve of the attainment of Independence.

That future is not one of ease or resting but of incessant striving so that we may fulfil the pledges we have so often taken and the one we shall take today. The service of India means the service of the millions who suffer. It means the ending of poverty and ignorance and disease and inequality of opportunity. The ambition of the greatest man of our generation has been to wipe every tear from every eye. That may be beyond us, but as long as there are tears and suffering so long our work will not be over.

And so we have to labour and to work, and work hard, to give reality to our dreams. Those dreams are for India, but they are also for the world, for all the nations and peoples are too closely knit together today for any one of them to imagine that it can live apart. Peace has been said to be indivisible ; so is freedom, so is prosperity now, and so also is disaster in this One World that can no longer be split into isolated fragments.

To the people of India, whose representatives we are, we make an appeal to join us with faith and confidence in this great adventure. This is no time for petty and destructive criticism, no time for ill will or blaming others. We have to build the noble mansion or free India where all her children may dwell.

I beg to move, Sir,

"That it be resolved that :

(1) After the last stroke of midnight, all members of the Constituent Assembly present on this occasion, do take the following pledge :

'At this solemn moment when the people of India, through suffering and sacrifice, have secured freedom, I,......, a member of the Constituent Assembly of India, do dedicate myself in all humility to the service of India and her people to the end that this ancient land attain her rightful place in the world and make her full and willing contribution to the promotion of world peace and the welfare of mankind.'

(2) Members who are not present on this occasion do take the pledge (with such verbal changes as the President may prescribe) at the time they next attend a session of the Assembly.

3

MAULANA A.K. AZAD

[Maulana Abul Kalam Azad* (1888-1959) deserves to be regarded as one of the great nationalist leaders of the Gandhian era. He was a devout Muslim and a robust nationalist and, as such, he adhered to a line sharply different from that of Sir Syed Ahmed Khan and his ardent followers. In 1903 he launched a fortnightly paper *Lisan-ul Sidq* (Voice of Truth) with a resolve to effect social reform of his co-religionists. Subsequently he started another journal *Al Hilal* (The Crescent) to arouse political awakening among the people. As a great scholar of Arabic, Persian and Urdu languages he wrote profusely on social, economic and political problems of the country and sought their solution in social regeneration and national emancipation. He abhorred the view that the Muslims should adopt the way of isolation or live like adulators of the British rule and so he exhorted them to join the national mainstream. To the great surprise of the leading lights of the Aligarh School, he reinterpreted Koranic injunctions to strengthen his stand for the grant of political rights and justice. He became the follower of Mahatma Gandhi and took part in the non-violent non-cooperation movement. He was arrested and, in the Calcutta court, made a historic statement (Qaul-e-Faisal) which, in the words of Prof. V.P. Varma, "may be regarded as the cogent statement of his political ideas." At the age of thirty five, he presided over the Special Congress session held in Delhi on 15 September, 1923. He was elected

*His name was Mohiuddin Abul Kalam Ahmed and 'Azad' was his pen-name.

as the President of the Indian National Congress in 1940. He always laid stress on Hindu-Muslim unity and did not bother for the wild allegations levelled against him by Jinnah and other leaders of the Muslim League. He refuted the two-nation theory and during the crucial days of 1945-1947 he firmly stood for the unity of India. When the unfortunate event of country's partition looked inevitable, he could not conceal his unhappiness at the last-moment change in the attitude of his colleagues like Sardar Patel and Nehru. He pinned his last hopes on Gandhiji and when the Mahatma relented on the issue of partition, he felt taken aback as he records in his autobiographical narrative (*India Wins Freedom*) that has been rather misinterpreted by his critics as an exercise in self-glorification. Maulana Saheb, in the words of Dr. Radhakrishnan, was a self-sacrificing patriot" and "one great thing for which our people have to remember him is his work for India's unity".]

LISAN-UL-SIDQ*

Aims and Objectives

"Truth redeems and falsehood kills". The responsibility and duty of *Lisan-ul-Sidq* is to guard against falsehood and lead the nation on the path of truth. As it has been assigned the duty of speaking nothing but the truth, the nation should not expect it to trill sweet music. Since truth is always bitter, the "language of truth" cannot be sweet. It expresses itself in harsh words and bitter criticism which is not always palatable, in fact is often quite irksome. Not far is the time when "redemption through truth", and "death through falsehood" will become apparent to you.

The aims and objectives of this journal are as follows :

1. Social reform *i.e.*, reform in Muslim society and customs.
2. Promotion of Urdu, *i.e.*, extending the scope of scholarly literature in the Urdu language.

*From Maulana Azad's fortnightly paper *Lisan-ul-Sidq* (The Voice of Truth) dated 20 November, 1903.

3. Propagation of literary taste, particularly in Bengal.
4. Criticism, *i.e.*, objective reviews of Urdu publications.

Explication of Objectives : Social Reform

The primary reason why these absurd customs became second nature to us was the negligence of religious scholars which made the common man regard them as part of the religion and binding on every Muslim. Certain customs meant monetary gains to the ulemas, and this prevented them from affecting any change When no reforms were introduced and the customs persisted for a long time, they became an integral part of our daily life.

During its last phase, the Muslim empire experienced a period of degenerate laxury. In Lucknow this decadent life style spawned new customs. There is no doubt that many obnoxious customs, related to happy and sad occasions, emanated from the courtly and carefree life of Lucknow. When India entered a new phase, having been influenced by a new civilization, it became difficult to continue the old practices. Production of goods and acquisition of education became prime necessities. Despite this, however, customs and usages remained intact. A special custom marked every occasion, and every one continued to observe it. Since the original financial resources were no longer available, practising old customs and usages proved ruinous for hundreds of families. Thousands of rupees were squandered on festive occasions. Social pressures were such that no one dared to deviate from the established norm.

On the subject of the Indian social conditions, one of our Turkish friends told us that the main reason for India's poverty was its customs and usages, which, under social duress, forced people to squander money. In Lucknow you will often come across cases where a loan of Rs. 5000 is drawn for the marriage of "Babban Mian" or two houses are mortgaged for the circumcision ceremony of "Chhuttan Mian". The families, having no other means of income, are reduced to starvation. If such ceremonies had been performed simply, these two families would have been spared the penury.

Adherence to customs and usages has given birth to many evils in India but, unfortunately, to date, no one has a tempted to eradicate them, and this virus continues to spread in the nation. Some people maintain that other reforms are more urgent. They feel that if society becomes hostile to social reforms and starts to suspect the motives of those who try to affect them, their efforts in this direction would be doomed. The other possibility is that the more urgent reforms will never get underway.

Other people believe that when education becomes wide-spread and modern ideas filter down the social strata, people will automatically start thinking about reforms. It is, therefore, premature to introduce them at this moment. These beliefs have prevented the introduction of social reforms. Silence of the physician and ignorance of the patient has, unfortunately, made the disease incurable. If we persist in this attitude, the disease will develop immunity to every treatment and the best of the physicians will be unable to cure it.

The first party, referred to as "the majority", is engaged in several reforms, which are, indeed, essential for the nation. But the fact of the matter is that the "reform of customs and usages" is the one vital factor on which all other reforms depend Lack of education among Muslims is due mainly to their adherence to customs. In many families learning the English language is taboo because they have to conform to a traditional curriculum which is enforced by custom. "If English is taught to children," say the parents. "they will have no time for their traditional education". They believe that this will be a violation of established social norms. Adherence to these time-worn customs has created many obstacles in the way of reforms which can be removed only by the reforms themselves. It is, therefore, a mistake to regard "other" reforms more important and to delegate these to a secondary position. The second argument given is that since customs and usages are valued by our people, any effort to eradicate them will create hatred for the reformers and is likely to impede the progress of all other reforms as well. But it is a well-known fact that every effort to introduce reforms has

always met with opposition. Our effort to popularize the learning of the English language, got us defamatory appellations and hatred a slander which we are not likely to forget. If efforts are made to reform people who have been steeped in ignorance for a long time, whatever its form or manifestation, they will arouse people's ire. To ignore an important set of reforms such as those related to customs and usages is a serious mistake.

For the second party to expect that when education becomes universal, people will opt for reforms is a misplaced expectation. Experience has shown that ancient customs and usages which are handed down from generation to generation are not terminated by education. The pressures of society and family culture often overcome the effects of education. An educated person, outside his four walls seems free and civilized, but once inside, he is bonded to ancient customs. The effects of education, which make him civilized and free outside, are neutralised inside, under the weight of customs. No doubt education creates certain feelings, but to sustain these very feelings a strong movement is needed. Unless that movement creates a powerful inclination in that direction, the individual may not agree to eschew these customs. The name of that movement is *reform*, and, the time has come to try to accomplish it. This is no time for idle talk and purposeless discussions. We must, at once, begin what we desire to accomplish.

It is very fortunate that the Mohammedan Educational Conference and Nadwatul Ulema have concentrated their efforts on cultural reforms. At present we do not want to enter a discussion about the past activities of Nadwatul Ulema. But since its Delhi session, the Conference has started educational work which deserves our full attention. The expectation is that these efforts will yield tangible results.

The Conference has created a separate Department of Cultural Reform. A well-known ex-student of Aligarh College, Mr. Khwaja Ghulam-ul-Seqalain, has been appointed its Secretary, who richly deserves this position. To serve this

purpose Khwaja Sahib has started a journal called *Asr-e-Jadid*, thereby creating a method of enrolling members who will be asked to take a pledge not to observe any customs. We appreciate these efforts to Khwaja Sahib and hope that when he presents the record of his good work at the Bombay Conference ; the entire gathering will value it. In view of its importance, the objective of cultural reform has been added to the aims of *Lisan-ul-Sidq*. However, since the most harmful customs concern society, the journal will continue to give greater priority to social reforms.

CRUSADE FOR INDEPENDENCE*

The History that shall be written of Indian freedom.

Whatever crisis has to occur will occur, regardless of the evil designs of an inauspicious group. It is certain that a day will come when a political revolution will have swept India. The fetters of subjugation, which she has put on her feet, will be severed by the scimitars of the 20th century freedom winds, and all that has to be done will be done. Suppose at that time a history of India is written, do you know what it will record about seven crore people of India ?

It will record that there was an unfortunate and ill-fated community which alway hindered the country's progress, and proved an everlasting impediment to its advancement. They were an obstacle in its path of freedom, a toy in the hands of covetous ruler, a puppet for the aliens, and a deep wound on India's brow. They were an instrument in the hands of the government with which it crushed the hopes and aspirations of the country.

History shall record that they were a pitiable and bewitched people, who became metamorphosed into animals by magical incantations of some old high priests. They were led by the nose by their master, who made them dance to their tunes. These creatures rejoiced in their slavery, displayed no human

*This article appeared in Vol. I. no. 23 of *Al-Hilal*,. dated 18 December, 1912.

will, mind, emotion, in short, not the slightest evidence of having any human qualities. They neither used their brains nor raised their voices. They were unable to walk on their own legs or lift their hands ; dazed creatures whose consciousness depended on the will of the hypnotist. Theirs was an inert existence, like a tree which depends on the wind for making the slightest movement, a boulder which can stir only when pushed by a living hand ; they were a burden on the earth's bosom. Alas ! they were a stain of misfortune on the brow of humanity.

A painful scene of the degradation of Islam

It will be written that such was the pitiable condition of those people who were called Muslims, who had been chosen to receive the heritage of the world, to be the representatives of God on earth, and who were the custodians of the history of human dignity and grandeur.

They were sent to this world to liberate God's creatures from tyranny and bondage. They were sent to break the chains of slavary, not to put them on their own feet ! They had come to destroy the fetters with which the Satanic forces (and in Islamic terminology any supermacy, other than God's, is Satanic) had bound human beings, and not to put them around their own necks. The only exception to this was the chain of divine worship. They were designated God's representatives so that they could rule over others, not so that they should become complacement about their own slavery. They were sent here so that they could lift up others who fell at their feet, not so that they could grovel in the dust of degradation and slavery, and be kicked around. They were the followers of a faith which was revealed to mankind so that it could rule over others, not so that it should be ruled by them.

Alas ! Who were these *Muslims* ? Is there any quality of human excellence which is not included in this most endearing and sacred word uttered by God ? They were Muslims and, therefore, it was their duty to do in India all of that which ultimately the others did. They were Muslims, therefore, the

flag of India's Independence and progress should have been in their hands. All other communities should have followed in their footsteps ; because they had Islam, and Islam means to lead and not to follow. The power of Islam is such that others, by acknowledging its greatness, attain physical and spiritual salvation. Islam does not bow before any world force.

The mind is for thinking, not for slumbering. You who regard sleep as wakefulness, and death as life, tell me, for God's sake, if not this, what will be written about you in the years to come ? Believe me at the time of writing these lines my heart is pained, my soul is restless. The wounds on my heart are bleeding afresh, and my pen fails to capture my agitation. What is it that I see ? All of you have eyes too, but can't you see ? What is that voice that I hear ? You have ears but can't you hear ? Ah ! my people what shall I say to you ? For the sake of God tell me if you do not believe that you follow the true faith, that you have been honoured with the name of Islam, and that you have been endowed with God trust. If you believe in this, then you should know that you have been created to be fearless, bold, independent, and self-governing. You have been created not only to be free yourself, but to free others from the bonds of slavery. I go a little further and assert that you have been created to that you may lay down your life for the sake of truth. Why is it that I see all these qualities in others, but Oh ! unfortunate people, not in you ? What a strange and astonishing phenomenon !

A Particular Chapter of Indian History

If you believe that Indian history will have a glorious chapter about you, let me predict its contents and read it to you. No doubt there will be a chapter. But do you know what it will say ? It will say that when India moved forward on the path of progress and independence, Hindus paved the way with their lives. But when the bugle was blown on the battle field, the Muslims hid themselves in the caves. Hindus called out to them, but they sealed their lips. When the country was smarting under unjust laws, it were the Hindus

who launched a crusade, and the brave Muslims not only refrained from jumping into the foray, but let out demented shrieks that all those struggling against injustice were no better than ordinary rebels.

The Story of Indian Repression

This country had an agricultural economy. Its peasant class was being ruined, its resources were being siphoned off into England, and, soon, the economy was destroyed by the increasing demands for raw goods. Contracts for the extension of railways were granted to English companies so that they could gobble up additional wealth. No money was made available for irrigation to enhance the agricultural output of the country. Lip service was paid to our loyalty, but we were not allowed to touch the arms because we were regarded with the utmost suspicion. While all the wealth of the country was being squandered away on feeding seventy thousand red-neck soldiers with the choicest foods, the starving blacks were deprived of educational and health care facilities. Even salt was taxed ; education could only be had at the cost of property and home. When she became the monarch, Queen Victoria lovingly promised that there would be no question of distinction between the ruler and the ruled, and that the path which was open to one, would be open to all. But when we took her at her word and got moving, we found all doors shut in our faces. Every Englishman became concerned about the distinction between the ruler and the ruled.

These were the conditions in which the country was placed. The Hindus rose in revolt and dedicated all their energies to a crusade against oppression. But precisely at the same time, the Muslims not only fractured their own hands and feet but also wanted to cripple anyone who was possessed of sound limbs. At the time when Hindus were lighting the flames of the country's Independence, the Muslims were contentedly sitting around the corpse of education. Someone had uttered the magic words, "Time has not come," and they were completely taken in. A genie of Arabian nights had, with his magic incantations, turned them into immobile masses of rock. They were a hindrance in the path of the country's progress.

The Muslims Record of Nationalism

The future historian, who will record the chronology of events, will write that, ultimately whatever had to happen, happened. In the 20th century no country could remain in bondage, and none remained. The British government was a constitutional entity. It was not the autocratic rule of Chengiz Khan. Therefore, it did what was expected of it, and India became Independent. But the world will remember that this turn of events owed nothing to the Muslims; whatever happened rebounded to the credit of every other community except the Muslims. Muslims always preferred slavery to freedom, grovelling in the dust to dignity and honour. The political independence of India is, indeed, a memorial to human dignity. But Muslims have no share in building the memorial. If amendments were made in the country's laws, if beneficial laws were introduced, if people got rid of ruinous taxation, if compulsory education was introduced, military expenses reduced, and, lastly, if the country became self-governing, it was due only to the Hindus, respectable Hindus, Hindus who set an example for the Muslims by starting the political agitation and continuing it.

As for the Muslims, they regarded it as a sin and remained aloof from it. And when they tried to start something, Satan exhorted them to prostrate themselves before the government, and, with tear-filled eyes beg alms from it. Beg not for a guinea or jewels, but for a rusty copper coin or a rotten crust of bread.

The Muslim League

After a long time the shackles were broken. That which has been called heresy was declared a virtue. But how? Was it the result of their efforts, their decision making, their consciousness, their awareness, or their spiritual guidance? On the contrary, it was the result of the strategy devised by the others. Those under whose command they had taken refuge in the caves, now ordered them to come out and prostrate themselves. The last act of this drama was staged after the Simla deputation and was given the name of "League".

If you build a house of snow, and call it the house of flames, will it transform the ice to fire ? If you push a button to make the toy clap its hands, will it become a human child ? Ignorant people ! Why don't you speak ? Answer me. Perhaps no one in the world has disgraced politics as you have been doing for the last six years ; you who worship silver and gold ! Your existence is a disgrace for politics and your actions a stigma on the fair name of India. You turned slavery into a house of icons and called it the mosque of politics. You bowed your head in deference to arrogant pride and deceived people by informing them that you were being elevated to the status of dignity. You were continually bogged down, but you pretended that you were running in open fields. You were misguided yourself, and, in turn you misguided others.

The question is not of the roof but of the bricks used in the foundation. It is futile to describe the condition of the wall ; you must discover the flaw in its foundation. Politics is fire that flares up of its own accord and is then stirred into flames. It is not a glass of iced water offered by some goldliveried cup-bearer. The first mistake was made when, after many years of death-like inertness, you began to stir. But it was not done at your own initiative, enthusiasm or willingness. It was done at the bidding and the behest of others. The result was that politics became another form of slavery, and a gimmick to divert people from the right path. All effort was directed at getting concessions from the government. The strength that should have been pitted against the government, was used against the Hindus. This proved to be the anti-climax. A nation should feel that it is standing on its own feet, not buttressed by others. The fact about concessions is that they depend not on one's own strength but on the favours shown by others. While they should not ignore their legitimate rights, the real efforts of the Muslims should be concentrated on strengthening their base.

Sacrifices of Muslims for the Enslavement of the Country

The Hindu-Muslim issue is an acrobatic feat in which, unfortunately, those who are expected to perform are rarely found in the arena. Dissensions in our army are a source of

satisfaction for our enemy. The insinuation that "You have not yet made progress in education, and, therefore, your politics should consist of getting back your rights from the Hindus," is a cunning move of our vicious antagonist. Earlier, too, I had drawn your attention towards it. It was natural that the British government should need a sacrificial lamb to stabilise its gains in India. The ideal "offering" presented itself before them in the form of a community which had dissociated itself from the rest of the country, and was prepared to join forces with them. This community irrigated the plant of British imperialism with the blood of its hopes and aspirations. By placing themselves on the sacrificial slab, the Muslims took upon themselves the burden which all the other community of India had declined to bear.

If the leaders had not cast a spell on the Muslims and placed blinkers over their eyes, they would have shed tears of remorse and regret at this sad spectacle. They would have realised that the problem of the country's progress and prosperity has entirely become a "Hindu problem" and Muslims, as a community, have nothing to do with it. Whether debated at the House of Commons or at a Congress forum, the "Indian problem" remained a "Hindu problem". Still it is important to remember that although the country has placed the responsibility of its progress and independence on the Hindus, this very responsibility was once bestowed on you (you who have forgotten your destiny), by God Almighty. Islam's natural mission is to crusade for truth and to liberate man from the bondage of his fellow creatures. God wanted to place you in the front ranks. But alas! First you forgot Him and then your own selves, with the result that now there is no place for you, even in the last row.

I will ask you to be patient, but you need not hold your tongue, because the time for reproach is now. We have anxiously waited for this day. Mere presence of desire will not produce the goal. You may provide brick and lime ; still without builders, the house cannot be constructed. These new overtures of the League are, indeed, very alluring. But they are not attractive enough to make one fall in love all over

again ! There is, however, an imminent danger that the ones with a high libido may succumb to its enticement

There is no doubt that the reform of the system and a search for an ideal is the only remedy for this malaise. But the search itself cannot identify the disease and provide the correct prescription. It is necessary that the diagnosis should be correct and the prescription should suggest the real treatment of the disease. If the League agrees to the above, so far so good.

Agreement

To tell you the truth the League was, and still is, disappointing, unless it proves itself otherwise. People have realised fully that not only in important political affairs, but in ordinary dealings the League is of no use : as a matter of fact it is very harmful for the bright future of the country.

At a time, therefore, when we are discarding the League and searching for a new path and a new pivot, the League has, once again, beseeched us to forget the past incidents. If the League wants to win our love, it is better that we enter into an agreement. This agreement will be a legal contract with no ambiguities or perplexities. Let the League forget its past, and, provided, it wants association with us, it must dissociate itself from others. In that case we will also give up the company of others and form an exclusive association with it. But it should be clear that this is our last agreement. If, ever again, we find it associating with others, this agreement will be null and void.

We want to make it very clear who we mean by "others". Let us tell the League that it is not timely for us to make exacting demands on you. We are not against your associating with the government. The Congress' example is before you and now the government is itself encouraging the hopes. But association with the government should mean occasional contact, without compromising your dignity.

Terms of Accord, Ideal

In a political struggle the quest for an ideal is of primary importance. If you want to live, you must keep some high

ideal before you, so that it may continue to be a source of inspiration. It has often been stated that no nation can offer to a struggle its whole-hearted zeal, wisdom and vigour, unless it sets an all-demanding ideal before itself. In a word then, freedom is one ideal, the very thought of which quickens the heartbeat and inspires us to action.

The League has set out in quest of an ideal. It should not be allowed to go astray. There are no two thoughts about the political ideal for India. Our thoughts on this subject are different from the common trend. We want to come in from a diffrent direction and move towards the same objective. But to expect the same dedication from the League is futile. It should simply announce one ideal, "Under British protectorate self-government for India".

> "*Narkh bala kun ke aezani huruz.*" (*Amir Khusro*)
> "*Ask for a higher price, because the bid is still low.*"

Remember that the ideal we have suggested for the League is not a very lofty one. Our own resolution demands a higher rung on the ladder. Still it is better to make self-government your political ideal and start your journey this very day. With this laudable objective in view you will forget the rigours of the struggle that you are engaged in.

We have, again and again, pointed out the complications that have been created in this matter during the last thirty years. Now we believe that the Muslims have forgotten several unpleasant things; their fears and misgivings about the Hindu majority, the impact of the past history of Hindus and Muslims, and the alien government being the better choice for them. We are not demanding self-government at this moment so that the question whether or not the country is capable of managing its own affairs may, once again, be raked up. The objective is to keep it as an ideal before us and to gradually strive to attain it. For heaven's sake get rid of the fear of the Hindu majority. This was a Satanic suspicion created in the minds of the Muslims. Power is not only a numbers game, it depends on something else also. The important factor is the real strength

of a nation which is the result of its moral values and character, its unity, and, to use the Islamic terminology, the will of God and good deeds. All these suspicions were created in our minds because no joint and lofty ideal was placed before the country. If from the very beginning all the people had set their sights on one goal, one ideal, there would have been no reason to look in different directions, and all those forces, which, today are shedding each others' blood, would have been united in its quest,

Gentlemen, lend me your ears, because I am raising an important point. Your aimless wandering, selfishness, self-seeking, dissentions and indifference to self-sacrifice and self-denial, all this is result of the fact that your eyes have nothing beautiful to look at. The breath-taking beauty that we have discovered is unknown to you.

If ever the dazzling vision of freedom comes within the range of your vision, everything else will fade into oblivion. Once beauty floats into the orbit of your vision, try as you may, you will not be able to tear your eyes away from it.

Hardships of the Journey

Many people have come so far as to agree with us that Muslims should choose the same ideal for themselves ; but they are afraid of the hardships of the journey. Oh, my forgetful brothers ! Your apprehensions are beyond comprehension ! This is a political slaughter house, a scaffold for martyrs. This is not your playground of thirty years. If you are afraid of hardships, find a bed of roses Who asked you to step in this valley of thorns ? If you venture to step inside, you will be stung by nettles at every inch of the way, and every moment you will face trials. You are worried about hardships, while we are playing the death roulette. This is no place for the covetous. In this field of combat, the brave are those who keep their heads not upon their shoulders, but on the palms of their hands.

Politics is not instant magic ; you draft a resolution, move a vote of thanks, retire to your pleasure houses, and wait for

your desired objective to descend from heaven and stand before you. No one has asked you to jump into this foray, but if you do, search your heart well, whether or not you have the grit to play this game until the end.

Personification of Slavery and Assertion of the Spirit of Politics

When people are reminded of your political past, they don't know whether to laugh or to cry. Your buffoonery in politics is unmatched by the vices of any nation. Every little vermin reeking of sycophancy, slavery and selfishness, comes forward and claims that he is the chosen messiah and political reformer. Those milk-livered creatures, strangers to risk-taking, who can't endure even the slightest coldness from the government, claim that they are boxers in the political ring, and have entered the bout to display their fighting skills. Those who know better, laugh and cry at the subversion of the cherished values of mankind.

Oh, God ! That precious item for which only mutilated bodies and chopped heads are an adequate price, is going so cheap in the caravan of the League, that even those who have just a few counterfeit coins in their hands, are making their bid.

O ignorant people ! Remember, if you want to live you must not be shy of setbacks. Only those who are living suffer reversals ; the dead are immune from it all. If you desire peace, the best place for you is the grave. If you keep a sedentary posture, naturally, you will never fall. But if you walk, there is every chance that you may stumble and graze your knees.

Reform and Change in System

The Muslims made the mistake of selecting their leaders from amonge the elite. These people are trussed in a thousand chains, and, invariably, impose the same type of bondage on their followers. The only two attributes they have are wealth and class, nothing else. Your fault, in fact, is greater than

theirs. When you dragged them out they were forced to come, notwithstanding the fact that their circumstances stood in their way. Had we been in their position, we may have behaved in a similar manner. It is essential that the League make a resolution to take politics away from the grip of wealth and entrust it to the brains.

Remaining Term of Incarceration

Time has come when instead of a select few, the League should be handed to the people. The elite would be requested, in all humility, not to meddle with our concerns and leave us to our fate. We should properly apologise for our past mistakes. With folded hands we should say, "Forgive us; we pulled your carriages, garlanded you, turned ourselves into beasts and gave the reins in your hands For all that we did we deserved to be punished, and punished we were. Now if a few years of the term remain, please allow us remission in view of our good conduct and the rules of government. Take pity. Remove our shackles." Unless this problem is solved, merely altering the rules and regulations of the League is not going to help.

Jehad : Crusade for Independence

The article has become lengthy, but we could not restrain the flow of our thoughts. Many points are still to be made, but I leave to you to surmise whatever remains unexpressed, and ask your permission to say a few other things.

You have spent many nights of stupor and intoxication. Now for God's sake stir yourselves and look how far the sun has travelled on the horizon. Where have your companions reached and how far behind them are you still lingering ? Do not forget what you are ; Islam is making its demands on you. How long will your misdeeds pile shame on this Divine faith ? How long will you allow the world to laugh at you and not shed a single tear over your dismal state ? How long will the niche of Islam in India remain a gaping hole, drained of all its energy ? If you must be whipped in order to regain sanity, are there any lashes of calamities and misfortunes which you have not received ?

Remember, that for the Hindus the struggle for the country's Independence is a part of their patriotism. But for you it is a

religious duty and a part of the crusade for Allah. He has designated you *Mujahids* or Crusaders ; the scope of Jehad or Crusade includes every effort made for truth and justice. Jehad means to break the shackles of human oppression and bondage. Those who are, today, engaged in the struggle for country's independence are launching a crusade which you should have initiated. Awake, because now Allah wants you to rise. It is His will that Muslims, wherever they are, should re-dedicate themselves to the duty of this Jehad. So far you have done nothing in India, though Allah wants you to make your best effort and, here too, accomplish all that you are expected to accomplish in other parts of world.

EDUCATION AND NATIONALISM*

Mahatmaji,

You have witnessed the fervour of non-cooperation at various places in India. You have seen students boycotting their studies at many educational institutions. You are also aware of the sad spectacle of many people breaking their oaths. I shall not mention those regrettable instances that took place at Jhansi and Aligarh. I feel I must bring to your notice the present gathering of students whose eyes are glued to your face. This is a body of young men which has remained steadfast to the oath it undertook in the very beginning. They are a group that has preferred the after-world to this world. They have renounced the grand buildings of the Madrassa Aalia and its imposing well-decorated hostel provided with all possible means of comfort, because they are obedient to the divine injunction, and as they are true and honest sons of India. They left that place without bothering as to where they were going or how they would live. Those people have suffered in all manners for the sake of non-cooperation. They have spent the long chilly nights of winter on bare cold floors and are still living like that for they cannot afford to buy string cots.

It must be mentioned that though this Madrassa is being instituted today, in connection with the non-cooperation move-

*Speech at the Inauguration of Madrassa Islamia, Calcutta, on 12 December, 1920.

ment, I have been thinking about it for a long time. I have long desired to liberate the Arabic education in Bengal from the bondage of the Government. Accordingly, I have held repeated discussions with the trustees till it culminated in the reinstitution of the Madrassa on the first of Rabiul Awwal. I have used this word intentionally, for the Madrassa was originally established when the Jama Masjid was built. In its new phase, however, I have upgraded it from an elementary *Maktab* to an institute of higher education.

I would like to draw your attention to a special distinction that graces this group. Among the many damages that the governmental system of education in India has caused to our national character and ways of life, perhaps the biggest damage has been that the real purpose of acquiring education was hidden from us. Learning is a sacred trust bestowed upon us by God and we should seek it for its own sake. But the official universities tell us another tale. They want to attract us to learning because we won't get government jobs without it. Consequently, at present. learning is not acquired in India for its own sake but for the sake of livelihood. Those huge educational buildings, those colonies of English education, are filled not with lovers of learning or seekers of truth but with those who worship a handful of wheat and a cup of rice, those who have been assured that without acquiring this education they cannot earn their bread.

But, I would like to bring to your notice that within the gloom created by this degradation and insult of learning, there has always been a ray of the light lit by the real and honest seekers of learning who have been studying the old religious books, the old languages and lores in the Arabic Madrassas. Believe me, it is the only group today that can be described as truly devoted to learning. For these people fully realise that to earn their livelihood they should have English education. They know that jobs will be open to them and high posts will become available to them only through English degrees, that English education is a must for a low-paid clerk as for the highest post. They know fully well that there is no market for Arabic education, that they cannot earn their bread through it. Despite all this, there is a mysterious and powerful urge

in their hearts which deters them from turning to English education, with the result that in spite of all adverse circumstances they devote their life to the Arabic learning. This urge springs up from a true love of learning and a sincere desire to please God. It has no worldly ends. And thus we observe throughout the country that, if there is any group that seeks learning for its own sake, it is these students of Arabic Madrassas. The boys of Aligarh University were not willing to boycott their classes. They were reassured by me after hours of discussions that they would be able to earn their living even after leaving their classes. Some of them wanted me to guarantee this. On the other hand, not one of these Arabic students questioned me. As soon as the divine laws were quoted to them, they bowed their heads in obedience and were immediately willing to forsake all.

I have pointed this out to you because only a jeweller can appreciate the true worth of a jewel and I know fully well that you are a connoisseur of sincerity and sacrifice.

KHILAFAT MOVEMENT*

The whole of India constituted the first arena for the Khilafat Movement which not only the Indian Muslims but all the races settled in India joined. In the first phase, the movement just dragged along; thousands of helpless people shouted slogans in favour of the Khilafat but they had no agreed programme of action before them, and no purpose except to hold meetings. Now the initial phase of the movement, when its strength was confined to strong feelings in the people's heart, is over. But we must thank God the Almighty for His blessings that He opened the flood-gates of His Grace upon us and despite our lack of action, and even though we did not deserve it, crowned us with success. Accordingly, we were victorious within a few months. The eyes of the world were opened and people realised that the Khilafat Movement was a national cause and not something espoused by a handful of persons only.

*Speech delivered at Khilafat Conference, Agra, on 25 October 1921.

It was essential for the success of this movement that it should not remain confined to the 70 million Muslims but should embrace all the 320 million Indians. It was essential that our Hindu brethren should also stand shoulder to shoulder with us and extend their full sympathy to the movement. For every man of faith—and each one of us is blessed with faith—should believe that the success of any cause in this world depends not on the number of persons advocating it but on the strength of the faith and the force of conviction and action behind it.

I have proclaimed repeatedly earlier and I reiterate today that there is no need to ask any brother Indian throughout the country to take the trouble of helping us in order to make this movement successful. The only way the Muslims can succeed is by trusting God, by relying on His help and by having full confidence in His own faith. But the point is that we could not solve the Indian problem without having a popular national movement which we found in the shape of the Khilafat Movement. In fact, one of the advantages in the success of the Khilafat Movement is that it revives the Indian problem with tremendous force and agitation the like of which had never been experienced in India earlier.

FINAL VERDICT*

Certainly I said that the present government is a tyrant. What else could I say ? I do not know why they expect that I should not call a spade a spade. I refuse to call black as white. The least that I can say and the softest adjective that I can use for this government is to call it tyrannical. There is no softer word to express that truth.

I would certainly reiterate that in the course of our duty we perceive only two alternatives, either the government should give up injustice and denial of our rights, or it must be destroyed I am not aware of any third alternative. This is as old a truth and as old a tenet of human faith as the seas and the mountains. Whatever is evil must either be mended

*Extracts from Maulana Azad's *Qaul-e-Faisal* (Final Verdict)—his statement in the Calcutta Court (February, 1922) as a satyagrahi.

or ended. There is no third possibility. If I am convinced that this government is evil, I cannot pray for its long life, till it mends itself.

Shall I tell you why millions of my countrymen and I feel like this ? The reasons and the logic behind it are so evident that we might say, in the words of Milton, that next to the sun, it is the most obvious and commonly perceived phenomenon in the universe, in as much as sensory perceptions are irrefutable. But I shall go further and say I believe in the government's tyranny because I am an Indian, because I am a Muslim, and because I am a human being.

I firmly believe that liberty is the birth-right of every nation and each individual and that no man or man-made bureaucracy has the right to keep God's creatures in bondage. Whatever attractive things may be done for those in bondage, slavery is after all slavery, something contrary to the will of God and against His Divine Laws.

Consequently, I refused to acknowledge the present government as the rightfut one and deem it my national, my religious and my human duty to liberate my country and my people from its servitude.

The well-known deception of reforms or progressive extension of self-rule cannot mislead me from this clear-cut and definite belief of mine. Freedom is the birth-right of man and none has the right to curtail it or to grant it in bits and pieces. To say that some nation should be given its freedom progressively is like saying that an owner should be given his property piecemeal or a lender should be repaid his loan in instalments. I believe that if a loan is not realised from a creditor in one full payment, it will, at best, be a compromise born of compulsion which does not repeal the right of the lender to realise his dues in one full payment.

In short, my views on this issue are quite clear and unambiguous. The present government is an unrightful bureaucracy. It is but a negation of the wishes and the will of millions of people. It always places its prestige above justice and truth. It justifies the barbarous general massacre of Jallianwala Bagh, Amritsar. It does not consider it unjust

that people should be made to crawl upon their bellies like beasts, nor does it mind if innocent boys are flogged mercilessly till they fall down unconscious for refusing to salute mechanically the Union Jack. The present government does not desist from riding rough-shod over the Islamic Caliphate despite persistent pleadings of 300 million human-beings. It does not consider it unbecoming to break all its pledges. It commits the patent injustice of handing over Smyrna and Thrace to the Greeks and sits back to enjoy the spectacle of the slaughter of the total Muslim population of these two cities. It shows boundless courage in trampling over justice and infinite audacity in controverting truth. Muslims constitute 70% of Smyrna's population but the Prime Minister shamelessly calls it a Christian population. The Greek government puts all the Muslims to sword and fire but, without the slightest hesitation, the Prime Minister concocts and relates tales of Turkish atrocities while the report of an American Mission sent by England herself, is suppressed.

Finally, instead of confessing these crimes and tyrannies, or atoning for them, every type of violence and repression was let loose during the last year, from the first of November to date, to suppress the just and peaceful struggle in the country. Should I call this government 'just and righteous' instead of 'tyrannical and unrighteous'? Does the oppressor, because he is possessed of power and has jails at his disposal, become entitled to some other epithet? In the words of the good old freedom fighter Joseph Mazzini of Italy, I would say :

> "We shall not deny your guilt just because you have some transient power in your hands."

In my address I had also explained the Islamic Law under which it becomes the religious duty of every Muslim to dissociate himself from the government under the present circumstances and to stop assisting it in any manner. It is this spirit which developed into the Non-Cooperation Movement under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi. The Conference also referred to the Islamic Laws under which it was sacrilegious for a Muslim to serve in the army as the Government was at war with the Islamic Caliphate and with Islamic countries. The Karachi case was filed against me because of

this resolution. I have repeatedly announced in public that the resolution was drafted by me and that it was passed thrice under my presidentship at meetings held in Calcutta, Bareilly and Lahore. Accordingly, I have the first right to be prosecuted, if this be a crime. I have also issued my presidential address in book form with some additions, and the book has already seen many editions, along with its English translation. Thus even documentary evidence of my offence is available.

During the last two years I have toured throughout the country repeatedly, alone and some time with Mahatma Gandhi. There is no city where I have not spoken more than once on the Khilafat, the Punjab affairs, the Swaraj and the Non Cooperation Movement and where I have not reiterated all the statements included in the two speeches filed against me.

In December 1920, the All-India Khilafat Conference was held along with the session of the Indian National Congress. In 1921, the session of the Jamiat-ul-Ulema was held at Bareilly. During October last, the Provincial Khilafat Conference was held at Agra. In November the All-India Ulema Conference met in Lahore. I happened to preside over all these meetings. At each place, whatever was said by the various speakers and whatever was spoken by the President, it contained the same material as is found in the above-mentioned two speeches. In fact, I must admit that the previous speeches were even more definite, clear and categorical.

If these two speeches of mine call for an indictment under Section 124.A, I fail to understand why only the speeches delivered on 1 and 15 July were selected for this honour, because I have committed the so-called crime so many times that I have lost count of it. I shall be compelled to say that during the last two years I have done nothing which does not fall under Section 124.A.

Well, the future will sit in judgement on whatever is happening today. Justice will prevail and injustice will be annihilated. We have implicit faith in the verdict of the future.

It is, however, natural that having seen the clouds one should wait for the rains. Today the weather indicates all the symptoms that denote a change of seasons. We pity those who have eyes and yet cannot see the portents.

In the speeches which have been filed against me, I had declared that the seed of freedom can never be nurtured until it is watered by violence and repression.

And the Government has started watering it.

COMMUNAL HARMONY AND NATIONALISM*

Representatives of the people, ladies and gentlemen :

It has been necessary for us to meet in this historic monument, prior to the appointed time, because we are at a critical juncture in our struggle for Independence. We need to look for solutions for the difficulties that lie ahead. If I say that the difficulties of the hour and the tasks before us are unprecedented in the history of Congress, I will be voicing the sentiments of every individual in this Assembly. Three years ago, when you had gathered at a similar Assembly in Calcutta, it was an important moment in history ; as significant as those occasions at which nations make official declarations of wars for Independence. This day is reminiscent of those times when nations have to deal, not with declarations of war, but with intricate and decisive issues arising from those declarations. When we met on that day, you were concerned about the onset of war, today you are anxious about its outcome. That day you were intent on starting your journey, today you are facing the danger of getting lost. Then you were anxious to lift your anchor and set sail, but now, to quote Hafiz, "The ship has left one shore, the other gleams in the distance, and the lapping waves have encircled the bark."

Gentlemen, when I see that you have selected me to deliver the keynote address at this Assembly, I realize that the confidence you have placed in me is attributable to your generosity rather than to any special deserving on my part. I am thankful for the honour you have bestowed on me but I plead your assistance in the responsibility with which have entrusted me. There is no doubt that the task we have before us is extremely

*Presidential address at the Special Congress session held in Delhi on 15 September, 1923.

complex. But our faith is unswerving. We may have doubts about our methods, but not about our goals. Our modest efforts are aimed at justice and truth and we believe that what we are doing on this earth is God's favoured task. Although the ardousness of our journey may cause us anxieties, we should never allow ourselves to become disheartened. We should believe that God's providence which started us on our mission and gave us courage when we were weak and helpless, will continue to protect us throughout the balance of the journey, until we finally reach our victory goal.

Problems of the Time

If I had to comment on the current events and problems, I would have preferred silence to speech. There is nothing left to say which can shed new light or give us a new direction. There was a stage when the expression of Indian national sentiment was confined to criticizing the injustices of bureaucracy. Later, criticism then turned to complaint, and complaint became pro'est. At every perpetration of injustice we yelled, we bellowed. Now matters stand at a point when we have no option other than to make our own decision. Having seen so much injustice we have now become used to it as if it were a part of our daily life. It has become uncessary to talk of injustice, in fact, even referring to it is an insult to our intelligence. The stark reality has been disclosed to us. We can expect no surprises, nor can any further veils be lifted. We have no doubt that whatever has been happening to us will continue to happen, unless we take the initiative to change it. We are not dealing with people who will change with the changing times. We are dealing with a government which is blatantly unjust. And if it continues to become stronger, it will not be a result of its intrinsic strength. It will be because our negligence would have strengthened its foundations. Injustice is the essence and not an accident of this system. We should feel neither surprised nor angry ; we should try our hardest to terminate it, for once and for all.

The Great Turkish Victory

Gentlemen, I am sure that the first thing you expect me to do is to express on your behalf sentiments of joy at an event

which has a strange but glorious connection with your national struggle, and which marks a magnificent epoch of your national history. It was God's will that two distantly placed Eastern nations should be joined together in the name of justice and freedom in a way that one would feel the pain of the other, and the victory of either would be the rejoicing of both. Which are these two separate parts of the East which have been brought so close to one another in their common quest for justice and freedom ? First India, a country which while asking for her own Independence, demanded freedom and self-determination for Turkey, the Islamic Caliphate, as part of the package of her own national demands. Second, Turkey, a country which is witnessing the dawn of new nationalism, its revolutionary victories have dazzled the world like the working of a miracle. The spirit of her victorious partiotism has spread all over the Eastern world bringing with it a new message of life and hope.

The New East

We have to remember that the importance which certain events acquire in the pages of history is never perceived by the protagonists of those events. We, too, are passing through a revolutionary phase which fulfils those conditions, which, according to the historians, give rise to mighty revolutions. The world is fast heading towards a new era. All things that, until yesterday, were believed to be unassailable truths, are, today, shaken to their very core. The boundaries of this world are also getting blurred, as are its principles and beliefs. Many heights have fallen down and many depths have raised their levels. Having risen to the maximum height, things have started falling, and the gloomy night of despair has already reached that limit, after which daybreak is imminent. Who can foresee what the immediate future has in store ? Even so, whatever is happening makes it abundantly clear (and we don't need any fortune-teller to tell us), that a new East is emerging from these turbulent mutations. Today, the awakening in the East is going through its successive stages. Ghazi Mustafa Kamal Pasha's hands have not only shaken up the sleeping destiny of Turkey, they have knocked at all the

doors in the East. The echoes of that knock are resounding in the plains of West Asia, and can be heard through the wilderness of Africa. They are even heard over the lapping waves of the Indian Ocean, and, it would not be surprising if the echoes of this knock reverberate through every nook and corner of the East.

Gentlemen, India cannot ignore or forget its natural and geographical association with this magnificent movement in the East. She has linked her own struggle with this movement, and shares with the Turks the sentiments of togetherness and affinity. In fact, India commends the spirit of every Eastern nation which is fighting for freedom, and feels chagrin for every nation which is lagging behind in these endeavours. India assures the patriots of Egypt, Syria, Palestine, Iraq, Morocco and other Eastern countries, that millions of Indian hearts are praying for their success, and that their freedom is no less dear to us than our own Independence.

Constantinople and Yervada Jail

Gentleman, when we look towards the magnificent palace of the Khalifas of Turkey, and congratulate them on their splendid victories, our mind turns to a tiny cell in India where India's greatest son is imprisoned. I am certain that if there is anyone outside Turkey who deserves to be congratulated on Turkey's victory, it is the great leader of India, Mahatama Gandhi, who raised his voice in Turkey's support at a time where no one, not even Turkey herself, had spoken in her own defence. It were his discerning eyes that grasped the entire scope and depth of this issue at a glance, and invited all Indians to make it a national issue and not that of the Muslims alone. Gentlemen, the struggle that India waged under the guidance of Mahatma Gandhi for the Khilafat Movement is a very special and significant event of the present times, a debate on its consequences will be carried on for a long time in the pages of history. It is premature for us to assess all the consequences of this struggle. Even so, some of the consequences are so obvious that they admit no doubt or debate : and each one of them is so important and significant that a full-fledged struggle could have been launched to attain it. Due to the Khilafat Movement, the Hindu-Muslim unity

issue, without which India's freedom would be a shattered dream, was resolved, and the obstacles, which were blocking its progress for a long time, were overcome.

Difficulties of the Time

Gentlemen, right at the start, I had mentioned the difficult times we are passing through. For any national struggle, organized unity is most essential, and any kind of dissent is most dangerous. Our unity has weakened at this moment : therefore the dangers. I want to draw your attention to the nature and the extent of these problems, our inability to make an accurate assessment may result in another crisis. Today, we are at mid-point between despair and disappointment. If we underestimate the problems we face, we may become negligent, and if we take an exaggerated view we may find ourselves plunged in despair. We should neither be negligent nor scared. We must fight and overcome, and that can be done only if we correctly estimate the problems that lie ahead. What we need most of all are scales and measurements, rather than arms and ammunition.

The Uniformity of Laws of Social Life

At this stage we should reflect on the natural laws which govern society. They exist within our range of knowledge, but sometimes strong emotional biases obscure the realities which are otherwise recognized by the intellect.

In this amazing universe of life and movement, we are a minute particle like several other known particles, which are created during its continuous revolutions. What has happened once, will happen time and again, and what one person has experienced, will be experienced by all who follow a similar course. This is an unvarying and inviolable truth. In the words of the Persian poet-philosopher Omar Khayyam, "Life is the same story, repeated over and over again, with new names and new characters." To quote Victor Hugo, the famous French writer, "Life patterns are continuous, but repetitious."

This law of universality is as relevant for society as it is for individuals. Just as the actions of individuals are attributable not only to their individuality but also to their mental and

physical condition, so also the actions of society. Societies having the same temperament will react similarly, given similar circumstances. Birth and death of nations, their rise or fall, lethargy or energy, freedom or subjugation, success or failure, all is governed by one law. Whatever has befallen one nation will befall all others which follow in its footsteps. This amazing uniformity of social law has been expressed in these words by Abdul Rehman Ibn Khaldoon, a historian-philosopher of the thirteenth century, who first formulated the principles of the philosophy of history. He states, "If we omit the dates and names, then the history of one nation or era can be substituted for any and every nation and time. For men and dates constitute the only difference in the histories of different nations." A similar view has been expressed recently in a more comprehensive manner by the French author Dr. Gustave Le Bon. "When we have formulated the laws of social psychology in a manner similar to individual psychology, it would then be possible for us to write the history of a single nation and civilization, and use it for every nation and civilization. Its use will become permanent like a milliennium calendar."

A Stage of Trial

Let us pause for a moment and analyse the troubles we face today in the context of the psychology of collective action. There is no need to repeat the truism that as in the case of individuals, the real source of the actions of a nation lies in its collective mind. When the mental development of the members of a nation reaches the stage at which they feel they can express themselves, they wait for the right opportunity. Mental preparedness includes a strong motivation to surmount all differences of views and opinions, and the desire to mobilize all the diverse elements and bring them to a focal point.

When individual minds join together to form a collective mind, they are motivated by emotion rather than by reason or logic. Consequently, the focal point, too, is created by emotions and not by logic. When this condition is fulfilled, active struggle commences, and, depending on the underlying strength, a confrontation with other emergent and opposing forces takes place. Thereafter, the struggle may succeed in

attaining its goal, or, in accordance with the natural laws of progression, it advances, but with frequent pauses. These pauses are of varying length, and are governed by various laws especially the law of action and reaction. At such junctures we are plunged into despondency and wariness. The greatest impact of this pause is felt on the ideas which we have cherished all along. It seems as if a bunch of papers which were carefully tied in bundles has suddenly become loose. Differences start to appear. Winds of dissension begin to blow, and the national struggle runs into difficult times. Like group dynamics, this too, is a physical-dynamic, and, therefore, largely uninfluenced by reason or knowledge. No matter how sensible they are, and how well aware of the past experiences of the ages, people cannot stop themselves from reacting to these conditions. Nevertheless, if the vital parts of the struggle are sound, then all these physical symptoms do not constitute any real threat. Often the pause is momentary. Although on certain occasions it develops into a postponement and that state is fraught with dangers.

As soon as this stage is over, which was an essential period for the state of intoxication to wear off, the veil of depression is lifted, and the struggle begins with its previous fervour. It appears more energetic and longer lasting than before, because this momentary pause was only at the surface, deep down other forces were at work. In its fresh phase there is the added vigour of a new force along with those previously at work.

The actions of groups, like all changes and alterations in this world, either fade away or persist. They are not born fresh each time : they only rise and fall. We mistakenly feel that the fall is the end, and the rise, a new birth. To regard the suspension of any national activity as its end, is as erroneous as to say that the ebbs of the tide mean that the sea will never rise again. Our national struggle has arrived at such a suspension or hiatus. The struggle was hurtling along, full steam. Suddenly the decision of Bardoli caused it to pause, and it screeched to a halt.

It was natural that the sudden pause should prove painful. All those effects followed which are the natural results of suspended activities. One such effect is that our organization

has been shaken up. It appears that a packed and sealed commodity is being rapidly taken apart. The relative inactivity of our movement, the split in the Congress, the rupture in Hindu-Muslim unity, the failure of all attempts to bring about a union, all these are the effects of the shock that our movement has received.

Gentlemen, this is a stern trial from which we emerge triumphant, given our determination to secure victory. I hope you will not take individual incidents to heart. For those who understand the psychology of nations, and the course of history, this condition parallels the case of a runner who has paused for a breath before recommencing his marathon race.

It should not concern us that our opponents and critics are self deceived by our present condition, for their mental state is such that they will recognize power only when they are brought face to face with it. We should, however, have no doubts about the real strength of our position. What is it that we have lost ? The intellectual springs of our efforts are still strong and its foundations are still unshaken. We do not feel any slackening in their forward momentum. Can we doubt the evidence of our own success ? Do we not feel it in our heart as an abiding faith, before our eyes as an ideal, and in every vein like the spirit of life itself.

Gentlemen, allow me to make a statement on your behalf which, I hope, will reflect your thinking. With the greatest confidence I wish to announce that our struggle will continue as before. We have simply paused for a moment, a fact which has delayed the process of making a definite decision, but which has not stopped our struggle. Problems of sustaining enthusiasm and exercising caution have indeed, arisen but we emphatically deny any question of our relinquishing the struggle, or even of temporary despair.

While drawing your attention to the fact that there is no cause for despair, I must add that there is no excuse whatso-ever for slackening our efforts. We should not forget the unassailab e truth that, however trifling the disease, if neglected, it can prove fatal. The trial before us, today, *i.e.* the slackening of our activities, is a temporary ailment, but we

should not allow it to develop into a terminal disease. How can we guard against this? What is the solution to the current problem? What we need is unity and it is for this reason that we have gathered here today. This memorable day has dawned in order to provide us with a few moments for reflection which will tide us over the present crisis. We have invited the world to witness the consequences of our trial. Will we maximize the advantage of this opportunity? A few hours should answer this question.

Non-violent Non-cooperation

It is essential that I base my request on a fundamental premise. For the achievement of our objectives, we have adopted the principle of non-violent non-cooperation. Non-cooperation is based on that simple but universal truth that we should not cooperate with evil, so that it may be stopped from multiplying. All the religious and moral philosophies of the world share this belief. And if we substitute the word "harm" for the word "evil" (in my opinion the two are synonymous), we will find Non-cooperation not only a universal belief of mankind but a natural tendency in the animal world. Here we are reminded of the teachings of all religions. Islam has commanded its followers to adopt the path of non-cooperation with the intention that they should not support or strengthen those individuals or groups whose activities hurt their country. The same doctrine is found in other religions. In the political struggles of nations not only is non-cooperation a commonly accepted principle, but it has even been adopted as the universal principle of action. It is obvious that no community or nation has won freedom through cooperation. Every nation has struggled for its freedom and struggle means confrontation, not cooperation. Civil Disobedience is the strongest weapon of the weaker nations.

Whenever smaller nations have been unable to offer armed resistance to tyranny they have adopted this method as the only means of attaining their objective. This united voice of nations, religions, and morality is an age-old fact of life. "Suffer as you may but never turn your face away from what you consider to be right." It is said that in the weak and helpless beginnings of every religion, these principles are the

only support and strength offered. We see them reflected in Socrates' cup of poison. We see them engraved on the cross of Jerusalem. The streets of Mecca have heard their grand appeal The first two centuries in the history of the Christian faith were chapters that were written on this subject. During the time of the Roman Emperor, Severus, when the weak foundations of the Christian church were being shaken by the storms of tyranny and injustice, it was the unconquerable spirit of this principle that strengthened its tottering structure. A Christian martyr of that period, Tertulian, read a statement before the Roman judges, which has been quoted by the American writer, Draper in his book *Conflict between Religion and Science* : "Our community has not existed for long, but is there a single place where we do not exist ? Cities, islands, provinces, forts, barracks of armies, Courts of Empires, Chambers of Senates, we occupy every high place in your Government. We have left you nothing except your places of worship. Think it over. We can start a civil war if we wish, but our religion teaches us that it is better to be killed than to kill. Consequently, we suffer, we do not fight." Can there be a more perfect and more effective expression of passive resistance ? Today, after seventeen hundred years, we can use these words as our guiding light.

Count Leo Tolstoy

In modern times, the first man who preached passive resistance as a weapon for obtaining political rights, for opposing the injustice of government, and as a substitute for armed revolution was the great and true Christian teacher of Russia. His name is Count Leo Tolstoy. This principle is enunciated in his world famous teachings. He made a vehement protest against the soulless materialism of the Western civilization, the intolerable inequality of social conditions, the ruthless oppression by capitalism, and the tyranny of the Orthodox Russian Church. His extremist views resulted in an ex-President of America making the following comment : "They (his views) have, without doubt, passed the bounds of moderation and practicability." But in all the teachings of Tolstoy, passive resistance is explained as a simple and practical doctrine which shows the world the easiest way of fulfilling its aspirations.

The essential spirit of Tolstoy's teaching is that war and murder must end, and the forces that are aligned against justice and human rights should not be opposed with arms. Their power is based on the institutions which they have created, and if people stop participating in them, they will not be able to survive for a single moment.

Mahatma Gandhi

The world has always needed Mahatma Gandhi's practical guidance more than theoretical preaching. There is nothing new or exciting about the concepts of reality and truth, but recognition and pursuit of truth is always an exhilarating experience. We all recognize that, in theory, it is our duty to fight for freedom ; but to actually fight for it was known to only a few men like Washington. Though Tolstoy expounded the theory of Non-cooperation, but his work waited practical exposition at the hands of another individual. So great a personality is he, that he seems to have been selected for this task by Providence itself. His name is Mahatma Gandhi. Even before Tolstoy, the world knew of the Non-cooperation concept, but before Mahatma Gandhi appeared on the scene, no one understood how this force could be applied in actual practice.

The Programme of Non-cooperation

The method of Non-cooperation which India adopted under the guidance of Mahatma Gandhi, was in principle, the same as the world had seen before, although changed in several practical respects. It used to be an ethical course ; it is now a political programme. The beliefs and principles presented by Tolstoy were so expansive that, on the one hand, they clashed with the existing thoughts and beliefs of men, as well as with many of their rules of conduct, and, on the other, they presented extreme practical difficulties. The present form of Non-cooperation has acquired a completeness of its own. As it stands now, it does not clash with religious or political beliefs. It contains no complexity which cannot be rationalized within a very short time. Non-violence is the soul of

Non-cooperation, with the proviso that if it is not accepted as an article of faith it be accepted as an expedient and strong policy. To break all ties which bind the bureaucracy to the people of India, is the central belief of Non-cooperation, but it has greatly narrowed its potential sphere of activities. It wants to work in a manner that its strictures cause the least possible suffering to those who adopt it as a weapon.

Self-sacrifice, self-restraint and moral strength are the weapons prescribed for use in this combat. But the movement allows us full latitude, and, except from select persons who can be held up as an example to the nation, it does not demand anything from the masses which may be difficult for them to do. For all those struggling for their rights, it has become a principle of political action which is extremely simple, and, therefore, practical. It assures a bloodless victory to all the nations of the world, and keeps in mind not only adherence to principles, but also the practice of policy.

Nature of the Programme

The fundamental principle of this programme is this : We should launch an unarmed and non-violent struggle against the present armed bureaucracy of India, and secure a victory which will compel them to lay down arms before the will of the Indian people. For India as for any other country the question that begs a decision is, "What should prevail ? The will of the people or the rule established by armed force ?"

The question arises, how will we launch our unarmed struggle ? Our programme suggests a course of action which is not inspired by necessity or expediency, but by firm conviction. It suggests that we detach ourselves from the present system of government for two important reasons. First, because it is an intrinsically evil force, and second, because our Non-cooperation will drain its strength and render it impotent. That this is our need as well as our duty, is the unanimous verdict of religion, ethics, experience and history. We should not become an instrument of the injustice which we are being subjected to.

There is no doubt that Indian history can be altered between the rising and setting of a single sun, provided that unanimously and simultaneously, we withdraw from active co operation. How should this be accomplished? All our difficulties are summarized in this one question. In this war, which is not a war, the answer to this question has to be given on a war-footing.

The Non-cooperation Movement has divided its strategy into two natural parts. First, the collection of war materials, and second, the business of war. War materials mean men inspired by the spirit of passive resistance. War means a confrontation between our passive strength and their bureaucratic power. This trial of strength must come to a head sooner or later.

The Mentality of Non-cooperation

It is clear that the misunderstandings which have been propagated about the mentality of the Non-cooperation Movement are quite far-fetched. It is believed that Non-cooperation is a challenge to Western civilization and science, and that it preaches a new code of morals and a new religion instead of politics. There exists the mistaken impression that it advocates complete dissociation from wordly activities, and stands for retrogression rather than for progress. I reject this view as a complete misinterpretation. Non-cooperation has no direct link with educational, social or civic issues.

In India, there are several views about the pros and cons of Western civilization and culture. The mental placidity of Europe and America, too, has been disturbed and new ideas are cropping up. Like Leo Tolstoy, Mahatma Gandhi, too, has his own ideas about Non-cooperation, but the concept itself is fairly focussed. It has no religious instruction to offer its followers, nor does it have a new scheme for prayer and renunciation. In every way it qualifies as a political programme, based on truth and fact. Religion, morality and history recognize its existence, and have their own respective names for it. If it preaches the boycott of schools and law

courts, it is not motivated to do so because of any opposition to European sciences and legal practice, but because it hates the oppression under which Indians are compelled to work in these institutions. Its insistence on the use of *Khaddar* is not due to hostility against expensive Western materials, but rather a preference for home-spun ; and also because of the belief that for her political salvation, India needs to adopt simple habits and a rigorous spirit of self-discipline.

The Success of the Experiment

I have no hesitation in stating that the programme has far exceeded the normal degree of success expected from such a programme. If three years ago it was a principle, the success of which could be anticipated by reasonable projection, today it is a tried experiment, the effectiveness of which is borne out by observation and experience.

National revolutions are not born within the precincts of a country, they are first felt in the depths of the human heart and soul. In twelve months, Non-cooperation has completely changed the Indian mentality. It has increased the political capacity of all classes of people. It has brought the message of liberty and patriotism to every single individual on this continent. It has created revolutions in the lives of thousands. The fear of punishment and pain that is natural under these conditions, was so completely rooted out that imprisonment became a sport, and law courts became theatres of public entertainment. There is not one single avenue of the liberty struggle which has not been opened to us. If these events are of recent vintage what more proof do we require of the fact that the programme is wise, practical and unerringly effective ? Non-cooperation Movement never claimed to work any miracles. Its humble contention was that, provided that country adhered to it, it could, without weapons and violence, acquire a degree of spiritual strength which would prove invincible when pitted again bureaucratic power. Aren't these results a conclusive proof of its success ?

Discipline

Just as blind obedience is an impediment to all success and progress, discipline is a prerequisite for all corporate action. A commander may have made a mistake in issuing orders, but a soldier must obey even though he does not agree with his leader. If we receive the wrong commands, we must be prepared for death, like the regiment at Sebastopol for whom Tennyson has written the famous elegy, rather than disobey. Better suffer the consequences of wrong leadership than have the whole army defect on the battlefield.

Today, our leadership is reposed in one single body, the Indian National Congress. We are in a state of war. We should give our blind obedience neither to Congress, nor to its leadership, at the same time, however, should not step outside the boundary of discipline.

The Councils

After considering all aspects of the situation, I have reached the conclusion that under the present circumstances, it is useless for us to boycott the Councils. During the previous elections, boycott was considered necessary ; that necessity has now been reversed. Today it is useful for us to occupy as many seats as possible. We should enter the Councils and Assemblies, and follow a plan of action which makes them yet another forum for our activities. I believe that our future programme should be such that one section of our party should enter the Councils, while the other should continue its activities outside.

Hindu-Muslim Unity

I have taken so much time in describing our superstructure, that the question of the foundation, i e. Hindu-Muslim unity still needs to be considered. Without this foundation, our freedom and all the factors of our country's life and progress will remain a dream. Without it, once again, we cannot create, within ourselves, the primary principles of humanism. Today,

if an angel were to descend from the heaven and declare from the top of the Qutab Minar, that India will get Swaraj within twenty-four hours provided she relinquishes Hindu-Muslim unity, I will relinquish Swaraj rather than give up Hindu-Muslim unity. Delay in the attainment of Swaraj will be a loss to India, but if our unity is lost, it will be a loss for entire mankind.

The Present Condition of the Country

No one who has the slightest love for India can remain unmoved at her present condition. Four years ago we made a grand announcement to the world. In a voice filled with national pride we asked the world to standby and wait for our freedom. But the moment the world's attention became focussed on us, a different story became evident, the story of our shamelessness and bloodshed. Instead of Swaraj and Khilafat, slogans of *Shuddhi* are being raised. "Save the Hindus from Muslims", says one group. "Save Islam from Hinduism", says another. When the order of the day is, "Protect Hindus" and "Protect Muslims", who cares about protecting the nation ? The press and platform are busy fanning bigotry and obscurantism, while a duped and ignorant public is shedding blood on the streets. Bloody riots have occurred at Ajmer, Palwal, Saharanpur, Agra and Meerut. Who can say where these unfortunate consequences will lead ?

Communal Organizations

It was not so long ago that the Muslims, as a community, took no part in the activities of the Congress. They felt that being small in number, and deprived of wealth and education, they could not afford to participate in any national struggle. As a result, they held aloof from the national movement and confined themselves to communal organizations.

Those of you who have been studying changes in Muslim corporate life during the last twelve years know that mine was the first voice raised in 1912 against this attitude. I invited the attention of my Muslim brethren to the fact that by persisting

in the policy of aloofness they were making themselves an impediment to the freedom of the country. I said, they should trust their Hindu brothers, abandon the policy of communalism, join Congress, and make the country's freedom their ultimate goal. At that time message was not well received by my Muslim brethren. I found strong opposition to my views. But not long after that the Muslims recognized the truth. In 1916, when I was interned at Ranchi. I heard that a large number of Muslims were entering the fold of Congress.

Just as in 1921 I raised my voice against the Muslims, and fear of their opposition did not deter me from the truth, so also today. I consider it my duty to raise my voice against my brothers who are hoisting the flag of Hindu *Sangathan*. I am surprised to see that the mentality of the Muslim political circles of those days is being mirrored among these people today. But whereas the Muslims were prompted by the fear of their numerical inferiority, these excitable people are four times the number of Muslims.

I declare, without hesitation, that India wants neither a Hindu nor a Muslim *Sangathan*. We require one single *Sangathan*—the Indian National Congress.

Some responsible leaders of the *Shuddhi* movement assert that it is not opposed to Hindu-Muslim unity. Therefore, after preaching opposition, they end on a note of cordiality and love. To these gentlemen I would suggest that having already led us along the wrong path, they should not now invite us to deny human nature. Jesus Christ asked people to forgive their enemies. But the world to this day, has not even forgiven its friends. Do you believe that having excited the passions of jealousy and revenge, you can continue the business of cordiality and love ?

On the subject of *Shuddhi*, I want to say that while, in theory, we can separate our common struggle for political salvation from our religious quarrels. in practice, we cannot keep them in different compartments, We want composite nationhood. It will, however, be impossible to create an atmosphere of

harmony when slogans of *Malechh* are being raised in one quarter, while the other is resounding with cries of *Kafir*.

The National Pact

Let me remind you that we should, without further delay, prepare a National Pact which will not only define our national goal, but will also give a verdict on the daily clashes and future relationships of all the communities that make up our country.

Conclusion

Like the historic days of other nations, this remarkable day may result in diametrically opposite consequences. We can either achieve the greatest possible success or the most dismal failure. This is a time of trial for our patriots, our determination, and our courage. Come, let us overcome every obstacle and devote ourselves to building our common destiny.

ISLAM AND NATIONALISM*

In 1920, the flux of successive events had left little room for unbridled indulgence in the intricate exercises of the intellect and the imagination. Mahatma Gandhi saw the Khilafat issue as a simple and practical proposition, and took up the cause. He did not think it necessary to probe the issue deeper, since the fact of the matter was that the demands of the Muslims were not against justice and propriety ; and if they had the support of the Hindus it would strengthen the bonds of friendship between the two communities. At this stage of its political life, the country needed no more inquisition. He immediately took up the cause, and before the "if's" and "but's" began, he had started the campaign. Consequently, within months, a popular movement started to flourish. The Khilafat demands became the common demands of the Hindus and Muslims. Hundreds of thousands of Hindus

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expressed, along with the Muslims, a deep and selfless interest : and it may be said that in certain cases they even surpassed the Muslims.

But when the period of practical activity came to a close, a reaction started against it. The very movement which, a few days earlier, was most popular in the country, now created doubts in the hearts of many people and became a debatable proposition. At the time when thousands of people were going to jail to get a fair deal for Turkey, no one bothered whether or not the vehemence in this demand was in keeping with Indian nationalism. But today, everyone is worried about this question, and, again and again, doubt is being expressed.

On the one hand there are the people who are critical and have started a controversy oh this issue, on the other are those Muslim firebrand writers who, lacking a clear perception of reality, are taking recourse in exaggerated accounts. Some of them have read discussions in previous issues of *Al-Hilal*, which postulate that the large-heartedness preached by Islam is not in consonance with the narrow mindedness of patriotism. Since these people are not aware of the context in which those columns were written, they take them to mean that Islam is against "nationalism" and that no Muslim should become a "nationalist". There are some people who complain of the political insensitivity of Indian Muslims. When they notice that the Muslims do not take as much intrrest in the political problems of their own country as they do in pan-Islamic problems, they naturally feel that is due to their preoccupation with wide-ranging matters. They feel it is time to get rid of them.

The large-heartedness of Islam neither negates nationalism, nor is it necessary for nationalism to limit Islamic perception. Both these points are unduly exaggerated. Reality lies not on either extreme, but in between the two. What is this middle course ?

The purpose of this article is to search for the "middle course". Because it is a multi-dimensional problem, it is, therefore, necessary to divide it into separate parts.

Social Life and its Evolution

What is Nationalism ? It is the concept for a special state of man's collective consciousness and a notion of social order. It distinguishes one group of people from another and makes it possible for a large number of them to come together to lead their lives and undertake their collective responsibilities. It is better, then, to examine the human predieament with regard to man's social relations and beliefs, before we look at the teachings of Islam in this respect.

Man develops a natural affinity for the place where he lives for a period of time. His fondness for it is for more than one reason. First, the physical conditions of the place coordinate the course of his life in a manner that each of its seasons and attributes correlates with some aspect of his life, and it develops an attractiveness for him. Secondly, the continuity and consistency of experience, by itself, has an influence on his animal consciousness. It naturally becomes more familiar with the things it comes in regular contact with. Thirdly, with the place of habitation all the affiliations of race and kinship also merge. Man has his kith and kin at the place where he is born and brought up, and its every nook and corner becomes associated with their affections and memory. Therefore, after racial affiliation, man feels a kinship with his place of nativity, and, gradually, its hold becomes firmer. Eventually, it becomes the centre of his love, and pivot of his temporal aspirations.

"Patriotism" is a maturing one's allegiance to the "city-state". As civilization progresses and expands, habitations and towns grow in numbers, man's contacts become more extensive and the concept of city-state also starts to widen. Now, instead of his place of birth and habitat, man starts to regard the entire area (in a corner of which he lives) as his native land. Gradually the scope widens further and, in place of small patches, bigger tracts of land come into this fold, so much so that the concept of patriotism, now, encompasses an entire country.

The collective consciousness of race had unified the masses into a unit of race. Next, the consciousness of place and habitat created a unit more common and extensive than race. It includes different tribes and races and unifies them. Nationalism follows 'Patriotism' as the next stage of social consciousness. It connotes a wider scope of human relations, and encompassing all the earlier orbits, creates a higher order of unity. This orbit of social consciousness is wider than all the past orbits, and brings within its ambit larger and larger numbers of people.

The chain of relative extensions ends with the continental division. The final stage, where this process of evolution reaches maturity and completion, is the stage of 'Humanism' and 'Universalism'. At this stage man realises that the boundaries and relative affiliations of human associations and areas that he had created were not actual and natural. True relationship is only one, the entire earth is man's native land, mankind one family, and all human beings are brothers. At this stage the voyage of man's collective affiliations terminates, and, in place of unity of race, unity of place, and unity of nationality, the only and perfect unity, the unity of the human race, created by God Almighty, manifests itself. To begin with the piece of land where he was born meant everything to him. After birth, the four walls of the home became his universe. He looked at other creatures, and, before long, recognized the different species and the nature of each one of them. He looked at the sky, and, after thousands of years, realized that the sun has a social system and the earth is one of its members.

Islam and the Chauvinism of Patriotism and Nationhood

After a review of these premises, we should now look at the direction in which Islam wanted to lead the world. What was that destination and what was that goal ? That destination was 'humanism', and the goal was perfection in this evolutionary process. In the sixth century, when Islam was born, the world had not crossed the stage of 'tribe' and 'patriotism'. When Islam was born, the Arab population was a conglomera-

tion of tribes. Each tribe was confined within the ambit of its racial nationalism and refused to accept a wider domain. The ruinous passions of pride and boast, of contempt and disdain for mankind, of conquest and domination over one another, were deeply and strongly entrenched in their minds ; a parallel condition is hard to find in the history of any other nation. The individual members recognized no greatness or dignity in the world outside, which could supercede their respective tribes, Hundreds and thousands of lives were sacrificed, within moments, so that the prestige and pride of the tribe remained unblemished. All this is so well known and well established that no details need be given. The powerful poetry of Hamasa, even today, fills one's hearts with strong sentiments of pride in our race and genealogy. No other poetry in the world can compare in the expression of those sentiments with the poetry of the *Arab Jahiliyata* (pre-Islamic period)

Belief in the enclosures of family, tribe, place, and its bigotry is conveyed in Arabic by a word which can be translated as chauvinism. Chauvinism was based, first on Arabism, *i.e.* superiority of the Arabs over non-Arabs and, then, among the Arabs themselues, each tribe was steeped in the pride of its own racial superiority.

The inhabited world outside the Arab lands, too, was not aware ot a concept broader than that of 'race' and 'country'. Roman civilization provided the basis of Roman nationalism, but that, too, was based on race and place of birth Once when a Roman was arrested by the ruler of Sicily and was ordered to be flogged, with every stroke he cried. "I am a Roman !" Cicero, the celebrated Roman orator, in his lecture against that ruler said : "A Roman is laid in the centre of the forum and flogged. He does not cry with pain and complain of torture : he only repeats : I am a Roman." O Assembly of Legislators ! The victim was convinced that he could save himself from all suffering and humiliation by declaring that he was a Roman. Because, not long ago, being Roman was a sure guarantee of protection and prestige for a person." This is regarded as the most felicitatious of Cicero's legal lectures. Cicero emphasized the fact of being a Roman. He did not

say, he was a man. His concern was Romanism, not humanism.

But Islam did not stop at these junctures. It denied all these affiliations and their basis, created, as it were, by the limitations of human knowledge and perceptions. It did not recognise the artificial affiliations of race, country, nation, colour and language. It called man to the one and only relationship, of humanism and the natural bonds of brotherhood.

For mankind, scattered all over the world, it was necessary to divide themselves into different areas and groups. When so divided, it was inevitable that there be some means of introduction to make one group distinct from another. All these units were simply means of introduction ; he is an African, he is an Arab, he is an Aryan, he is Mongolian. This way the groups were recognised. But there were no distictions in this classification, nor was it a real division. There was only one real distinction ; the distinction made by one's deeds and endeavours. The truth of the matter is that the entire human race stands on the same footing and at the same rank. Providence does not bestow superiority on any individual, save the one who proves himself worthy of distinction and superiority by virtue of his own deeds and efforts.

Jo barh kar khud utha le hath mein, meena usi ka hai.

One who picks it by extending his hand, the goblet is his.

The whole of mankind belongs to one race, one family, one kinship. If, in fact, there is no difference of race for all race is one race, nor is there a difference of place, for we all inhabit the same earth, why is one group separated from the other ? Why do members of any family and kinship live with one another like aliens ?

The basic postulates of Islam in this regard are so well-known that they need no reiteration. My intention to refer to all those Quranic postulates which declare the unity of mankind, and to those verses which reveal that the origin of

submit before it, and become the living image of their faith and belief. The call of Islam was a call to 'humanism' and 'human brotherhood' : hence its bias against all prejudices that resulted from racial and national distinction. It is necessary, therefore, to examine the chauvinism of race and nation so that it becomes clar what the spirit of Islam is opposed to.

There are two aspects of chauvinism ; one, the protection of race and nation, and the other, the prejudices of race and nation. The spirit of Islam is opposed to prejúdice but not to protection. But the problem is that when such an orbit is formed, though it originates with the spirit of protection, later it turns into prejudice. To begin with, a group of people create the orbits of patriotism and nationalism in order to protect themselves from external invasion. This is 'defensive nationalism'. Its continuance over a period of time, however, gives birth to feelings of national superiority and patriotic pride, in place of national defence. 'Defensive nationalism' suddenly turns into 'jingoism'. Not content with its own protection, nationalism wants to attack others. Moreover, the heady wine of racial and national superiority evokes a sense of distinction from others and breeds contempt and disdain for them. As a result, violence erupts between different nations, and better human sense becomes dormant.

The only remedy for this situation was to restrict the creation of narrow orbits. Whehever a narrow orbit comes into existence, it means that the broad human circle has been sliced. In place of broader vision and sensibilities there is a narrow outlook and perspective. Islam, therefore, discourages the emergence of narrow orbits.

Nationalism, in its simplest form, has existed for ages. But the collective beliefs and ideas that the term brings to mind are the product of the new era of European civilization. It started as a defence for human rights and liberty, but has, today, become its greatest threat.

With the passing of the middle ages, Europe took a new turn. A new culture developed, and, with it, a new social

system. On the one hand, the spirit of knowledge and liberty was spreading all over Europe, and, on the other, the despotism of individual monarch and tyranny of foreign domination stood firm in its old glory. Consequently, a new conflict arose : the crown and sceptre and its unfettered claims, versus the new principles and aspirations resulting from liberty and knowledge. When people's spirit of liberty revolted against the crown and sceptre, a powerful and effective new terminology was coined. The word had always existed but now people discovered its magical connotation ; the word was '*nation*' and the discovery was '*being a nation*'. It was the revelation of '*nationhood*'. The claim of the crown, to quote Louis XIV, was : "I am the right, I am the might." But people were not prepared to submit to it any longer. Naturally, the question arose ; if royal lineage and inheritance of the crown and sceptre were not the legitimate sources of right and poser, then what is the force to which kings also must submit ? The forthright answer, *the nation* The nation became the solitary source of all rights and powers, only the nation had the right to rule over itself.

These were the virtues of nationalism ; but we must review its obverse side as well.

1. All that had occurred so far, was confined to Europe and to the Europeans. Outside the boundaries of Europe, nothing worked, neither the declaration of human liberty, nor the rights of a nation. It seems that Europe, in accordance with the old Roman tenets, decided that the world was divided into superior and inferior nations. All the principles of liberty and rights were meant for the superior, and not the inferior nations. Europe and America comprised the superior half, and the rest the inferior half of the world. Therefore, they (inferiors) had no right to demand human liberty and national rights which were the privileges of the superiors.

2. At the time when France was preparing herself for the third freedom revolution, no Frenchman felt that

> Ameer Abdul Qadir Jazairi and his unfortunate people who were subjugated by France through its military might also needed freedom. Today the world knows what is being done in Syria by France who claims to be the preacher of 'freedom' and 'nationalism'. England claims that she is the defender of small nations, guardian of freedom and liberty, and the refuge of patriots. But all this under what circumstances and for whom ? Certainly, it provided refuge to Russian immigrants, and opened its doors for those expelled from France. For the freedom of Greece, it produced its national poet Byron, and provided shelter to Mazzini of Italy, Europe's many revolutionary plans were made in the lanes and by-lanes of London. But what are the decisions this "freedom loving nationalism" made for the East and Asia ? It continued to provide succour to the oppressed Russians and Austrians, but has made no effort to extend help to those who were brutally oppressed by its very own hand. No answer need be given because today the sad state of affairs in the East and in Asia is evident.

The above situation had an inevitable reaction. Before the 19th century had made much headway, its signs became visible. The lower echelons of society began to realise that, despite talk, real liberty and equality was non-existent. The present organisation of nations which was established on the basis of equality and liberty had itself become a hindrance. Before the advent of modern times, despotism and unequal distribution were confined to a few hands and a few families ; now they were extended to bigger groups. Consequently, the forces against equity and justice were no longer concentrated and centralized as before. Yet, so far as human liberty and equality are concerned, mankind is as far away from them as it was before.

The forces of capitalism, more than ever, have come to acquire the controls. The domination over people that royal lineage and aristocratic tradition had held for centuries has

FINAL AND PERMANENT SOLUTION TO INDIAN POLITICAL PROBLEMS*

The war which has just ended led to the postponement of many urgent problems. In some cases this was inevitable. In others, the war was made an excuse for such postponement. The final end of the war has suddenly brought all these problems to the forefront and war conditions can no longer be pleaded as an excuse. Both from the national and international points of view the question of India's freedom, political and economic, is now an urgent and vital issue on which depend not only the well-being of 400,000,000 but also to a large extent the future peace of the world.

This question always vital and important, has now been precipitated to the very forefront and there can be no further delay in its solution. The solution has now to be final and permanent one. Such a settlement can only mean the establishment of a democratic government for a free and independent India co operating in the international domain with the other free governments of the world. As a part of this settlement, and for the brief period between now and the assumption of office by the Government of free India under a constitution framed by the constituent assembly, interim governments both at the Centre and in the provinces will be necessary in order to deal with the acute distress prevailing in the country and with post-war problems, as well as to arrange the preliminary processes of the constituent assembly. But such interim arrangements can only be possible as a part of the final settlement.

It has been stated on behalf of the British Government that a constituent assembly should be summoned on the conclusion of hostilities. Hostilities have now ceased. The only excuse that may be advanced for a possible delay in convening the constituent assembly is the lack of a solution of the communal problem. This should offer no difficulty as the Indian National Congress has gone a long way to find a solution.

**The Hindustan Times*, 21 August, 1945.

In regard to the Hindu-Muslim problem, as it has taken shape today with the demand on the part of the Muslim League for a partition of the country, the Congress has given the most earnest consideration to it, desiring as it does, the well-being and freedom of the country as a whole and of each group or community in it. It has even recognized the right of self determination of any area provided that this is the established and declared will of the inhabitants of that area, but subject to the exercise of such right not resulting in the compulsion of any other group.

The Congress is convinced that the free Indian State can only be based on the willing co-operation of its federating units and of its principal communities and cannot be founded on compulsion. Further the Congress has declared that the federating units should have the largest conceivable amount of freedom to function as they will, subject only to certain essential bonds for their common welfare. Even independent countries adjoining each other have to develop these common bonds and links and can no longer live in isolation.

Thus the Congress has gone to the farther limit in recognizing the right of self-determination to the extent of separation under certain circumstances and with certain safeguards for the communities affected and for the country as a whole. It had done so in the earnest hope that when the problems are viewed in proper perspective and without passion and prejudice, the facts of the situation will induce all concerned to co-operate together in building up a free and democratic Indian State, with every freedom to the constituent units to develop according to their needs and wishes. But if any such unit or group of adjoining unit decides otherwise, it can take charge of its own destiny. It will be open to the representatives of such a unit in the constituent assembly to advance its claims and a decision on this should not rest on the majority vote of the assembly but on the vote of the representatives in the assembly of the areas concerned.

While the Congress position is clear, doubts and suspicions have not wholly disappeared and I feel that in order to remove

these some clarification is needed. I propose, therefore, to place this matter before the next meeting of the Working Committee and I am confident that the desired clarification will be forthcoming.

So far as I am concerned, after long and careful deliberation I have come to the conclusion that the division of India is wholly impracticable and opposed to the ultimate interests of Indian Muslims themselves.

But I realize also that the present political atmosphere of the country is surcharged with suspicion and doubt and a large section among the Indian Muslims does not seem to be in a mood to view realities in their proper perspective. This section can be expected to do so only when it is assured that the determination of their destinies rests with Muslims themselves without external compulsion. When this is realized, suspicion and doubt will largely disappear and efforts to reach a desirable and mutually satisfactory solution of the communal problem will be fruitful.

In the great tasks before us, all of us must get rid of the fear complex. I appeal to my fellow Muslims to view the question in this perspective realizing that their future lies in their own hands and there can be no compulsion on them. I appeal also to my Hindu and Sikh and other fellow-citizens to appreciate this approach to a problem which has troubled us so much and has been a bar to our progress.

With this approach on the part of Muslims aud Hindus and Sikhs, I have no doubt that the atmosphere of distrust will undergo a change and give place to a climate of mutual trust. Even the section of Muslims I have in view can then be trusted to begin to examine the question of separation dispassionately.

It should be borne in mind that if the right of self-determination is conceded to any area in such circumstances as prevail in our country, it is not to encourage fissiparous tendencies but to remove the very cause of distrust and, therefore, the desire for separation.

TRIBUTE TO SUBHAS*

The tragic circumstances in which Mr. Subhas Chandra Bose is reported to have died in exile will be learnt with grief in India, says Maulana Azad in a statement from Srinagar on August 25, 1945 on the reported death of Mr. Subhas Chandra Bose.

From his youthful days, he was passionately devoted to the cause of Indian freedom and pursued his aim with uncommon zeal and single-mindedness. He attained a high place in the estimation of his compatriots at an early date and was rewarded with the highest office in the gift of the nation.

His patriotism was beyond doubt and but for the wrong step he took at a critical juncture he might have been in our midst today. It is really most sad and tragic and that a life of much promise has met with a premature end in circumstances which everyone in India will regard with sorrow.

I cannot help thinking today of Mr. Sarat Chandra Bose and other members of the family who came under a cloud of suspicion on account of deceased's ill-fated association with the Axis Powers. They have suffered incarceration for a long period. Now that the war has ended and even Subhas Chandra Bose is no more, there is no reason left for prolonging the incarceration of any of them any longer.

Demand for their release has been repeatedly made by influential sections of their countrymen and I earnestly hope that the Government will no longer hesitate to set them free.

CLEMENCY TO INA PRISONERS**

The Government's decision about the prisoners of the commonly known Indian National Army : while recognising the special circumstances of the case it proposes that the leaders of the Army should be tried by Court Martial and the law

**The Hindustan Times,* 27 August, 1945.
***The Hindustan Times,* 1 September, 1945.

should take its course. This sounds ominious. It is commonly believed that in spite of the grave error of judgement these prisoners had no intention to embrace the Axis Cause but were moved by patriotic motive. The circumstances in which they are believed to have acted were extremely complex. Now that the war is over Indian sentiment and public opinion will in no case sanction the extreme penalty. I would not like to enter into the intricacies of international law but according to legal opinion the question of their status as British Indian subjects is not so simple and their trial by Court Martial would lack validity. In as much as the peculiar circumstances of these cases invite the saving provisions of international law, the liabilities should be judged by higher moral principles and international customs. In any case it should not be forgotten that Indian sentiments and feelings in respect of the Indian National Army would in no case allow the extreme penalty to be meted out to those who were victims of wholly unprecedented and unexpected circumstances and who acted with no motive other than that of patriotism. If combatant armies receive the benefits of international law and custom, nationals of a country under foreign rule are morally entitled to nothing less.

SELF-DETERMINATION NOT ON COMMUNAL BASIS*

On his attention being drawn to some reactions to his recent statement about self-determination, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, the Congress President, said on September 4 at Srinagar : "A careful examination of the Congress resolution and my last statement on the subject of self-determination will make it clear to anyone that it is the population of a well-defined unit or area whose right to self-determination is recognised. Obviously if a considerable majority of the population of such a region is Muslim, their decision will be the decision of the area concerned. But it does not mean disfranchisement of minorities living in the these regions.

**The Hindustan Times*, 5 September, 1945.

It is therefore, said in so many words that in whichever region the Muslims are in a majority they need have no apprehension that a decision which is not their own will be imposed on them. With this assurance made plain, it is for them now to examine the merits of union in an atmosphere free from extraneous interference with their choice. Extraneous interference here refers to the decision taken by persons not living in the areas concerned. I am deliberatily confining myself to broad principle of self-determination and do not desire to examine its implications in detail. In brief, both the Congress resolution and my explanatory statement concern themselves with territorial units and not exclusive religious communities."

It is learnt from reliable sources that Maulana Azad wishes to place the issue of self-determination before the Working Committee at its forthcoming meeting at Poona so that a detailed statement on the self-determination question, fully clarifying the Congress atttiude, could be issued.

Maulana Azad feels that contradictory interpretations being given to the Congress attitude are creating a lot of a misunderstanding and hence he considers it necessary that, as far as possible, all doubts must be removed.

The Congress President and Mr. Asaf Ali are giving deep thought to this question and invitations extended to Khan Abul Ghaffar Khan and Maulana Hussain Ahmed Madni for the forthcoming Working Committee meeting are more than significant in this connection."

LEAGUE FORMULA HARMFUL FOR MUSLIMS*

Maulana Abul Kalam Azad made the following statement on Monday, April 15, 1946 :

I have considered from every possible point of view the scheme of Pakistan as formulated by the Muslim League. As an Indian I have examined its implications for the future of

**Amrit Bazar Patrika*, 15 April, 1946.

India as a whole. As a Muslim I have examined its likely effects upon the fortunes of Muslims of India.

Considering the scheme in all its aspects I have come to the conclusion that it is harmful not only for India as a whole but for Muslims in particular. And, in fact, it creates more problems than it solves.

I must confess that the very term Pakistan goes against my grain. It suggests that some portions of it are pure while others are impure. Such a division of territories into pure and impure is un-Islamic and is more in keeping with orthodox Brahmanism which divides men and countries into holy and unholy—a division which is a repudiation of the very spirit of Islam. Islam recognises no such division and the Prophet says, "God has made the whole world a mosque for me."

Further, it seems that the scheme of Pakistan is a symbol of defeatism and has been built up on the analogy of the Jewish demands for a national home. It is a confession that Indian Muslims cannot hold their own in India as a whole and would be content to withdraw to a corner specially reserved for them.

One can sympathize with the aspiration of the Jews for such a national home, as they are scattered all over the world and cannot in any region have any effective voice of the administration.

The conditions of Indian Muslims is quite otherwise. Over 90 millions in number they are in quantity and quality a sufficiently important element in Indian life to influence decisively all questions of administration and policy. Nature has further helped them by concentrating them in certain areas.

In such context, the demand for Pakistan loses all force. As a Muslim, I for one am not prepared for a moment to give up my right to treat the whole of India as my land and my right to share in the shaping of its political and economic life. To me it seems a sure sign of cowardice to give up what is my patrimony and content myself with a mere fragment of it.

As is well-known, Mr. Jinnah's Pakistan scheme is based on his two nation theory. His thesis is that India contains many nationalities based on religious differences. Of then the two major nations, the Hindus and Muslims, must as separate nations have separate states. When Dr. Edward Thompson once pointed out to Mr. Jinnah that Hindus and Muslims live side by side in thousands of Indian towns, villages and hamlets, Mr. Jinnah replied that this in no way affected their separate nationality. Two nations according to Mr. Jinnah confront one another in every hamlet village and town, aud, he, therefore, desires that they should be separated into two states.

I am prepared to overlook all other aspects of the problem and judge it from the point of view of Muslim interests alone. I shall go still further and say that if it can be shown that the scheme of Pakistan can in any way benefit Muslims I would be prepared to accept it myself and also to work for its acceptance by others. But the truth is that even if I examine the scheme from the point of view of the communal interests of the Muslims themselves, I am forced to the conclusion that it can in no way benefit them or allay their legitimate fears.

Let us consider dispasionately the consequences which will follow if we give effect to the Pakistan scheme. India will be divided into two states. One with a majority of Muslims and the other of Hindus. In the Hindustan State there will remain 3½ croses of Muslims scattered in small minorities all over the land. With 17 per cent in U.P. 12 per cent in Bihar and 9 per cent in Madras, they will be weaker than they are today in the Hindu majority provinces. They have had their homelands in these regions for almost a thousand years and built up well-known centres of Muslim culture and civilization there.

They will awaken overnight and discover that they have become alien and foreigners. Backward industrially, educationally and economically, they will be left to the mercies to what would become an unadulterated Hindu raj.

On the other hand, their position within the Pakistan State will be vulnerable and weak. Nowhere in Pakistan will their

majority be comparable to the Hindu majority in the Hindustan State.

In fact, their majority will be so slight that it will be offset by the economical, educational and political lead enjoyed by non-Muslims in these areas. Even if this were not so and Pakistan were overwhelmingly Muslim in population, it still could hardly solve the problem of Muslim in Hindustan.

VISION OF FREE INDIA*

Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, the Muslim President of the National Congress told the New Delhi correspondent of 'Reynold's News' :

"My vision of a free India is of a Socialist India. I want to see the millions of workers and peasants of my country get a square meal and a square deal as a matter of right."

Another comment he made was : "I agree with Ernest Bevin that the old concept of State Sovereignty will have to be given up in time and that the Sovereign Powers of the Individual States must be merged in a world authority."

Of future Indian-British relations, Azad is reported as saying : "The future relations of our two countries are to be regulated by a Treaty and I have no doubt that the terms of the Treaty will be acceptable and mutually beneficial to both India and Britain, the Treaty will be signed by two independent and equal partners."

He added that the question of India remaining in the British Commonwealth was primarily a question for the constitution-making body, but said that if the Indian-British negotiations were settled satisfactorily, "India will have more friendly relations with the British than with any other peoples."

The New Delhi correspondent of the 'Sunday Chrnonicle' reports that Congress has a secret new plan for independent

**The Amrita Bazar Patrika*, 17 April, 1946.

India," which has been approved by the Working Committee and which AZAD, as the President of the Committee will lay before the British Cabinet Mission on April 17th 1946.

INTERIM GOVERNMENT MUST HAVE STATUS OF NATIONAL GOVERNMTNT*

(Azad-Wavell Correspondence)

Dear Lord Wavell,

Your Excellency will remember that the demand of the Congress from the very beginning of the present discussion regarding the interim Government has been that there must be a legal and constitutional change in order to give it the status of a truly National Government. The Working Committee has felt that this is necessary in the interest of a peaceful settlement of the Indian problem. Without such status, the Interim Government would not be in a position to infuse in the Indian people a consciousness of freedom which is today essential. Both Lord Pethick Lawrence and you have, however, pointed out the difficulties in the way of offering such constitutional change, while at the same time assuring us that the Interim Government would have, in fact if not in law, the status of a truly National Government. The Working Committee feel that after the British Government's declaration that the Constituent Assembly will be the final authority for framing the constitution framed by it will be binding, the recognition of Indian independence is imminent. It is inevitable that the interim Government, which is to function during the period of the Constituent Assembly must reflect this recognition. In my last conversation with you, you stated that it was your intention to function as a constitutional head of the Government and that in practice the Interim Government would have the same powers as that of a Cabinet in the Dominions.

This, however, is a matter which is so important that it would not be fair either to you or to the Congress Working

*Letter of Maulana Azad (Congress President) to Viceroy Lord Wavell dated 25 May, 1946.

Committee to let it rest upon what transpired in informal conversations. Even without any change in the law there could be formal understanding by which the Congress Working Committee may be assured that the Interim Government would in practice function like a Dominion Cabinet.

My dear Maulana Sahib,

I have received your letter of 25th May on the Interim Government. We have discussed this matter on several occasions and I recognise the importance that you and your party attach to a satisfactory definition of the powers of the Interim Government and appreciate your reasons for asking for such a definition. My difficulty is that the most liberal intentions may be almost unrecognisable when they have to be expressed in a formal document.

I am quite clear that I did not state to you that the Interim Government would have the same powers as a Dominion Cabinet. The whole constitutional position is entirely different. I said that I was sure that His Majesty's Government would treat the new Interim Government with the same close consultation and consideration as a Dominion Government.

His Majesty's Government have already said that they will give to the Indian Government the greatest possible freedom in the exercise of the day to day administration of the country ; and I need hardly assure you that it is my intention faithfully to carry out this undertaking.

I am quite clear that the spirit in which the Government is working will be of much greater importance than any formal document and guarantee. I have no doubt that if you are prepared to trust me, we shall be able to co-operate in a manner which will give India a sense of freedom from external control and will prepare for complete freedom as soon as the new constitution is made.

I sincerely hope that the Congress will accept these assurances and will have no further hesitation in joining to co-operate in the immense problems which confront us.

In the matter of time table you will be aware that All-India Muslim League Council is meeting on June 5, at which we understand decisive conclusions are to be reached. I suggest, therefore, that if you summon your Working Committee to reassemble in Delhi on Friday the seventh it may be possible for final decisions to be made by all parties on all outstanding questions early in the following week.

30 May, 1946 Sd/- Wavell.

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Dear Lord Wavell,

Thank you for your letter of the 12th June which I have just received, inquiring after my health I have now more or less recovered.

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru has reported to my Committee and me the gist of the conversations between Your Excellency and him. My committee regret that they are unable to accept your suggestions for the formation of the Provisional National Govt. Three tentative suggestions emphasise the principle of "parity" to which we have been and are entirely opposed. In the composition of the Cabinet suggested by the you, there is "Parity" between the Hindus including the Scheduled Castes and the Muslim League, that is the number of Caste Hindus is actually less than the nominees of the Muslim League. The position thus is worse than it was in June 1945 at Simla where, according to your declaration then, there was to be "Parity" between the Caste Hindus and Muslims, leaving additional seats for the Scheduled Caste Hindus. The Muslim seats then were not reserved for the Muslim League only but could include non-Muslim League. The present proposal thus puts the Hindus in a very unfair position and at the same time eliminates the non-League Muslims. My committee are not prepared to accept any such proposal.

Indeed as we have stated repeatedly we are opposed to "Parity" in any shape or form.

In addition to this "Parity", we are told that there should be any convention requiring that major communal issue should be decided by separate group voting. While we have accepted

this principle for long-term arrangements we did so as an effective substitute for other safeguards in your present proposals, however, both "Parity" and this convention are suggested. This would make the working of the Provisional Government almost impossible and deadlock a certainty.

As I have often pointed out to you, we are strongly of opinion that the Provisional Government should consist of 15 members. This is necessary to carry out the administration of the country efficiently as well as to give adequate representation to the smaller minorities. We are anxious that the various minorities should have scope in such a Government. The work before the Provisional Government is likely to be much heavier and more exacting. In your proposals Communications include Railways, Transport, Post, (Posts and Telegraphs) and Air. It is difficult for us to conveive how all these can be joined together in one portfolio. This would be highly undesirable at any time. The industrial troubles and in the possibility of railway strikes this arrangement would be wholly wrong. We think also that planning is an essential department for the Centre. We think, therefore, that the Provisional Government must consist of fifteen members.

The suggested division of protfolio appears us to be undesirable and unfair.

My committee should also like to point out that a Coalition Government in order to be successful must have some common outlook and programme for the time being. The manner of approach in forming such a Government has been such as to leave this out of consideration and my committee do not feel any confidence that such a Coalition can function successfully.

It was our intention to write to you about certain other matters also, but for reasons known to you our letter has been delayed. I shall write to you about these and other matters later. My purpose in writing to you now is to convey to you without any delay our reactions to the tentative proposals that you put forward today.

13-6-1946 Sd/-Abul Kalam Azad.

Dear Lord Wavell,

In my letter to you sent on March 31, I promised to send you another letter. I am now doing so.

On May 24th the Congress Working Committee passed a resolution which I conveyed to you. In this resolution we gave our reactions to the statement dated May 16th, 1946 which the British Cabinet Delegation and you issued on behalf of the British Government. We pointed out what were in our opinion some of the omissions and defects in that statement and we also gave our interpretation of some of its provisions. In a subsequent statement issued by you and the Cabinet Delegation our viewpoint was not accepted.

You know, and we have repeatedly emphasised this, that our immediate objective has been and is the independence of India. We have to judge everything by this standard. We suggested that even though no legal change might be made at this stage, independence in practice might be recognised. This has not been agreed to.

In your letter dated May 20, 1946 addressed to me, you explained what in your view the status and powers of the Interim Government would be. This too falls shorts of what we aim at, yet the friendly tone of your letter and our desire to find some way out led us to accept your assurance in these matters. We come to the conclusion also that, unsatisfactory as were many of the provisions of your statement of May 16th, we would try to work them according to our own interpretation and with a view to achieve our objective.

You are no doubt aware of the strong feelings of resentment which exist among large sections of the people against some of the proposals in the statement, notably the idea of grouping. The Frontier Province and Assam have expressed themselves with considerable force against any compulsory grouping. The Sikhs have felt hurt and isolated by these proposals and are considerably agitated. Being a minority in the Punjab, they become still more helpless, as far as numbers go, in Section 'B'. We appreciated all these objections especially as

we ourselves shared them. Nevertheless we hoped that according to our interpretation of the clauses relating to grouping, which we still hold is correct interpretation, for any other interpretation would endanger the basic principle of provincial autonomy, we might be able to get over some of the obvious difficulties.

But two insuperable obstacles remained and we had hoped that you would be able to remove them One of these related to the part of that European members of the Provincial Assemblies might play in the election to the constituent Assembly. We have no objection to Englishmen or Europeans as such, but do have a strong objection to persons, who are foreigners and non-nationals and who claim to belong to the ruling race, participating in and influencing the elections to the Constituent Assembly. The Cabinet Delegation's statement lays down clearly that the future constitution of India has to be decided by Indians. The basic principle of the statement of May 16th was the election of a member of the Constituent Assembly to represent one million inhabitants. On this basis the representatives of 140,000 Muslims in Orissa and 180,000 Hindus and 58,000 Sikhs in the North-West Frontier Provinces have not been given the right to elect any member to the Constituent Assembly. The European population of Bengal and Assam numbers only 21,000 but their representatives can return to the Constituent Assembly by their own vote seven out of 34 members, thus appropriating to themsevles the right to represent seven millions. They are returned to the Provincial Assemblies by a separate electorate of their own and have been given fantastic weightage. This representation of Europeans in the Constituent Assembly will be at the cost of non-Muslims, that is mainly Hindus who are already in a minority in Bengal. To make a minority suffer in this way is utterly wrong. Apart from the question of principle, it is a matter of the utmost importance in practice and may well affect the future both of Bengal and Assam. The Congress Working Committee attach the greatest importance to this. We would like to add that even if the Europeans themselves do not stand for election, but merely vote, the results will be equally bad. The Cabinet Delegation have

informed us that beyond promising to use their persuasive powers they could not hold out any assurance to us that these European members would not exercise the right which, we are advised, they do not possess under the statement of May 16th. But if the Delegation hold otherwise, as evidently they do, we cannot contemplate a legal fight for their exclusion at the threshold of the Constituent Assembly.

Therefore, a clear announcement is necessary that they will not take part as voters or candidates in the election to the Constituent Assembly. We cannot depend on grace of good-will where rights are concerned.

Equally important, in our view, is the question of parity in the proposal Provisional National Government. I have already written to you on the subject. This "Parity" or by whatever other name it may be called, has been opposed by us throughout, and we consider it a dangerous innovation which instead of working for harmony will be a source of continuous conflict and trouble. It may well poison our future as other separatist steps in the past have poisoned our public life. We are told that this is a temporary provision and need not be treated as a precedent, but no such assurance can prevent an evil step from having evil consequences. We are convinced that even the immediate result of any such provision will be harmful.

If the position about the European votes and "parity" remains, my committee are relunctanly compelled to inform you that they will not be able to assit you in the difficult task ahead.

The talk we had with you to-day has not made any substantial difference to the fundamental position. We have noted that, according to your new suggestions, the proposed woman member might be replaced by a Hindu thus increasing the Hindu members including Scheduled Castes representative to six. We would be sorry not to have a woman member, but, apart from this, the new proposal maintains the old Simla (1945) formula of parity between Caste Hindus and Muslims, with this important qualification that now Muslims are sup-

posed to mean members of Muslim League. We are unable to agree to this proposal and we are still convinced that the Provisional Government must consist of fifteen members and that there should be no kind of parity in the selections.

14-6-1946. Sd/- M.A.K. Azad.

My dear Maulana Saheb,

I have received your letter of June 14. You deal with matters on which we have already had much discussion.

We are doing everything possible to further the independence of India. As we had already pointed out, however, there must first be a new constitution drawn up by the people of India.

The Delegation and I are aware of your objections to the principle of grouping. I would, however, point out that the statement of 16th May does not make grouping compuslory. It leaves the decision to the elected representatives of the provinces concerned sitting together in sections.

The only provision which is made is that the representatives of certain provinces should meet in section so that they can decide whether or not they wish to form groups. Even when this has been done the individual provinces are still to have the liberty to opt out of the group if they so decide.

I recognise the difficulty about the Europeans who through no fault of their own find themselves in a difficult position. I still hope that a satisfactory solution of the problem will be found.

Our discussions in regard to the Interim Government have been on the basis of political parities and not communities. I understand that this is regarded as preferable now. As it was at the first Simla Conference in the proposed Interim Government of myself and thirteen others, there will be six Congressmen and five Muslim Leaguers. I do not see how this can be called parity. Nor is there parity between Hindus and Muslims, there will be six Congressmen and five Muslim Leaguers. I

do not see ow this can be called parity. Nor is there parity between Hindus and Muslims. there being six Hindus to five Muslims.

Even at this last moment, I still hope that the Congress will now accept the statement and consent to join the Interim Government.

15-6-1946. Sd./- Wavell.

Dear Lord Wavell,

I have received your two letters of June 15th. I note what you say about grouping. We abide by our interpretation of it.

As regards Europeans, we are clear that even on a legal interpretation of the statement of May 16th, apart from other considerations, they have not the right to participate in the elections to the Constituent Assembly. I am glad you expect a satisfactory solution of this problem.

We have endeavoured in our letter and in the course of our talks to state clearly what our position is in regard to any kind of parity. You will remember that parity was mentioned and considered at the first Simla conference that parity was exactly same as is now suggested by you, that is, parity between Caste Hindus and Muslims.

Owing to the stress of war and other conditions then existing, we were prepared to accept this only for that occasion. It was not to be used as a precedent. Moreover, this was subject to the inclusion of at least one Nationalist Muslim. Now conditions have entirely changed and we have to consider the question in another context. That is approaching independence and Constituent Assembly. As we have written to you, in this context and in present circumstances we consider this kind of parity unfair and likely to lead to difficulties. The whole scheme proposed by you in the statement of May 16 is based on absence of weightage and yet in the proposed provisional Government there is this weightage, in addition to other far-reaching communal safeguards.

We have tried our utmost to arrive at a satisfactory settlement and shall not despair of it. But such a settlement, in order to be enduring, must be based on strong foundations.

16-6-1946, Sd/- A.K. Azad

Dear Lord Wavell,

Ever since the receipt of your statement of June 16th, my Committee have been considering it from day to day and have given long and anxious thought to your proposals and to the invitations you have issued to individuals to form the Provisional National Government. Because of our desire to find some way out of the present most unsatisfactory situation, we have tried our utmost to appreciate your approach and viewpoint. In the course of our conversations we have already pointed out to you our difficulties. Unfortunatley these difficulties have been increased during the recent correspondence.

The Congress, as you are aware, is a national organisation including in its fold the members of all religions and communities in India. For more than half a century it has laboured for the freedom of India and for equal rights for all Indians. The link that brought all these various groups and communities together within the fold of the Congress is the passionate desire for national independence, economic advance and social equality. It is from this point of view that we have to judge our proposal. We hoped that a Provisional National Government would be formed which would give effect in practice to this independence.

Appreciating some of your difficulties, we did not press for any statutory change introducing independence immediately, but we did expect a "de facto" change in the character of the Government for making independence in action. The status and powers of the Provisional Government were thus important.

In our view this was going to be something entirely different from the Viceroy's Executive Council. It was to represent a new outlook, new methods of work, and a new psychological

approach by India to both domestic and external problems. Your letter dated 30th May, 1946 gives us certain assurances about the status and powers of the Provisional Government. These did not go far enough, according to our thinking but we appreciated the friendly tone of that letter and decided to accept the assurances and not to press this particular matter any further.

The important question of the composition of the Provisional Government remained. In this connection we emphasised that we could not accept anything in the nature of "Parity" even as a temporary expedient and point out that the Provisional Government should consist of 15 members to enable the administration of the country to be carried on efficiently and the smaller minorities to be represented in it.

Some mention of names was made and on our part suggestions were put before you informally, including the name of a non-League Muslim.

In your statement of June 16th, some of the names were made from the provisional list prepared by the Congress. The manner of preparing your list and presenting it as an accomplished fact seemed to us to indicate a wrong approach to the problem. One of the names included had not been previously mentioned at all and was that of a person holding an official position and not known to be associated with any public activity. We have no personal objection to him, but we think that the inclusion of such name particularly without any previous reference or consultation, was undesirable and indicated a wrong approach to the problem.

Then again a name from our list was excluded and in his place another of our colleagues was put in, but as you have said that this can be rectified, I need not say more about.

One outstanding feature of this list was the non-inclusion of any Nationalist Muslim. We felt that this was a grave omission. We wanted to suggest the name of a Muslim to take the place of one of the Congress names on the list. We felt that no one could possibly object to our changing the name

of one of our own men. Indeed when I had drawn your attention to the fact that among the Muslim League nominees was included the name of the person, who had actually lost in the recent elections in the Frontier Province and whose name we felt had been placed there for political reasons, you wrote to me as follows : "I am afraid that I can not accept the right of the Congress to object to names put forward by the Muslim League, any more than it would accept similar objections from the other side The test must be that of ability." But before we could make our suggestion I received your letter of the 22nd June which surprised us greatly. You had written this letter on the basis of some Press reports. You told us that the Cabinet Mission and you were not prepared to accept a request for the inclusion of a Muslim chosen by the Congress among the representatives of the Congress in the Interim Government.

This seemed to us an extraordinary decision. It was in direct opposition to your own statement quoted above. It meant that the Congress could not freely choose even its own nominees.

The fact that this was not to be taken as a precedent made hardly any difference. Even a temporary departure from such a vital principle could not be accepted by us at any time or place and in any circumstances.

In your letter of the 21st June you gave certain questions framed by Mr. Jinnah in this letter dated 19th June and your replies to them. We have not seen Mr. Jinnah's letter. In question 3 reference is made to "representation of the four minorities viz., the Scheduled Castes, the Sikhs, the Indian Christians and the Parsees," and it is asked as to "who will fill in vacancies caused in these groups, and whether in filling up the vacancies the leader of the Muslim League will be consulted and his consent obtained."

In your answer you say, "If any vacancy occurs among the seats at present allotted to representatives of the minorities, I shall naturally consult both the main parties before filling it."

Mr. Jinnah has thus included the Scheduled Castes among the minorities and presumably you have agreed with this view. So far as we are concerned, we repudiate this view and consider the Scheduled Castes as integral parts of Hindu society. You also, in your letter of June 15th, treated the Scheduled Castes as Hindus.

You pointed out that in your proposals there was no "Parity" other than between Hindus and Muslims or between the Congress and the Muslim League in as much as there were to be 6 Hindus belonging to the Congress, as against 5 Muslims belonging to the League. One of the 6 Hindus belonged to the Scheduled Castes.

We are in any case not agreeable to the leader of a party, which claims to represent a community which is a minority, interfering with the selection of names either of the Scheduled Castes, whose representation you counted as falling within the Congress quota, or with the selection of representatives of the minorities mentioned.

In question 4 the Scheduled Castes are again referred to as a minority and it is asked whether the proportion of members of the Government community-wise as provided in the proposals will be maintained. Your answer is that the proportion will not be changed without agreement of the two major parties. Here again one communal group functioning admittedly as such is given a power to veto changes in other groups with which it has no concern.

We may desire, if opportunity offers itself, to increase the representation, when it is possible to another minority, for example Anglo-Indians. All this would depend on the consent of the Muslim League. We cannot agree to this.

We may add that your answers restrict the Congress representation to Caste Hindus and make it equal to that of the League.

Finally, you state in answer to question 5 that "no decision of a major communal issue could be taken if either of the main parties were opposed to it." You further say that you had pointed this out to the Congress President and he had agreed that the Congress appreciated this point In this connection I desire to point out that we had accepted this principle for the long-term arrangement in the Union Legislature and it could possibly be applied to the Provisional Government if it was responsible to the Legislature and was composed of representatives on the population basis of major communities

It could not be applied to the Provisional Government formed on a different basis altogether. It was pointed out by us in my letter of the 13th June 1946, that it would make administration impossible and deadlock a certainty. Even in the question as framed by Mr. Jinnah it is stated that "in view of the substitution of 14 now proposed for the original 12", no major communal issues should be decided if the majority of the Muslim members are opposed to it. Thus this question arose after the substitution of 14 for 12 *i.e.* after your statement of June 16th.

In this statement no mention was made of this rule.

This very important change has been introduced, almost casually and certainly without our consent. This again gives the power of veto or obstruction to the Muslim League in the Provisional Government.

We have stated above our objections to your proposals of June 16th as to your answers to the questions framed by Mr. Jinnah. These defects are grave and would render the working of the Provisional Government difficult and deadlocks a certainty. In the circumstances your proposals cannot fulfil the immediate requirements of the situation or further the cause we hold dear.

My Committee have, therefore, reluctantly come to the conclusion that they are unable to assist you in forming a Provisional Government as proposed in your statement of June 16th, 1946.

With regard to the proposals made in the statement of May 16th, 1946 relating to the formation and functioning of the constitution-making body, the Working Committee of this Congress passed a resolution on the 24th May, 1946 and correspondence and conversations have taken place between your excellency and the Cabinet Mission on the one side and myself and some of my colleagues on the other. In these we have pointed out what in our opinion were the defects in the statement and also given our interpretation of some of the provisions of your proposals. We accept your statement. While adhering to our views, and proposals we are prepared to work them with a view to achieve our objective. We would add, however, that the successful working of the Constituent Assembly will largely depend on the formation of a satisfactory Provisional Government.

Your sincerely,
Sd/- A.K. Azad.

REVIEW OF NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE CABINET MISSION*

In our prolonged negotiations with the Cabinet Delegation and the Viceroy, my colleagues and I have throughout been guided by one governing principle. It was the achievement of Indian independence and the solution of all outstanding problems by methods of peaceful negotiations.

Such methods have both their advantage and their limitations. Independence achieved through violence and conflict may be more spectacular but etails endless suffering and bloodshed and leaves behind a heritage of bitterness and hatred.

Peaceful methods leave no bitter trail but neither are the results so spectacular as in a violent revolution. The present

*The Amrit Bazar Patrika, 28 June, 1946.

negotiations have therefore to be judged from this standard. Keeping in mind the method chosen and the peculiar nature of our problems, dispassionate observers will be forced to admit that though all our hopes have not been fulfilled, the results mark a decisive step forward towards the attainment of our goal. After searching discussion and analysis this was the conclusion reached by the Congress Working Committee, and they have accordingly accepted the long-term proposals.

As I have explained in my statement of the 14th April 1946, the Congress scheme for the solution of India's political and constitutional problem rested upon two fundamental bases.

The Congress held that in the peculiar circumstances of India, a limited but organic and powerful centre confined to certain basic subjects was inevitable. A unitary government could no more meet the requirements of the case than a division of India into several independent states.

A second fundamental principle was the recognition of the complete autonomy of the provinces with all residuary powers vested in them. The Congress held that the provinces would administer all excepting the basic central subjects. From the nature of the case, it would be open to the provinces to delegate to the Centre such other subjects as they choose.

It is an open secret that the Cabinet Mission's long-term proposals are framed according to the principles laid down in the Congress scheme.

A question about the implication of provincial autonomy was raised during the recent Simla conference. It was asked that if the provinces were fully autonomous, did not two or more of them have the right, if they chose of setting up inter-provincial machinery for administering such subjects as were allocated to them ?

The declared views of the Congress on the question of provincial autonomy did not permit a denial of the force in the contention. My correspondence during the Simla Conference has already been selected and given to the public a clear exposition of the Congress views on the question.

The only novel feature in the Cabinet Mission's scheme is the idea of grouping the provinces into three different sections. As soon as the Constituent Assembly meets, it will, according to the proposals of the Cabinet Mission, divide itself into three committees. Each Committee will be composed of members from provinces in the appropriate section and will together decide whether to form a group or not. Section 15 of the Cabinet Mission proposals has clearly recognised the rights of provinces to form groups or not. The Cabinet Mission intend that the provinces should exercise this right at a particular stage.

The Congress Working Committee hold that whatever the intention of the Cabinet Mission, the statement of 16th May does not bear such an interpretation. They hold that the provinces are fully autonomous and have the right to decide the question at any stage they like. Section 15 and the general spirit of the proposals support the Congress interpretation.

The provinces have the right to decide either at the very beginning before the Group Constitution has been framed at all or at the end after they have examined the group constitution as it has emerged from the Committee of the Constituent Assembly. I am convinced that the Congress interpretation cannot be challenged.

If a province decides to remain outside the Group from the very beginning, it cannot be compelled to come in.

There is the problem of Europeans in Assam and Bengal. The Cabinet Mission's proposals have done away with weightage of representation and have clearly laid down that there

is to be one representative for every million of the population. This automatically rules the Europeans out of the picture.

Once the weightage is discarded, they have no right to any representation at all on the basis of population. It is in the interest of the Europeans themselves to refrain from seeking election or participating in the voting. I am confident that the Europeans in Bengal and Assam will act with wisdom and statesmanship. Since the Europeans in Bengal have already decided to refrain from participating in the elections to the Constituent Assembly, I trust that the Europeans in Assam will follow their example.

It must, however, be admitted that one grave flaw in this picture is the delay in the formation of a provisional Government. Such provisional Govt. alone can provide the atmosphere in which the Constituent Asembly can function with a sense of full freedom and authority. Their mutual interactions are so intimate that each would suffer in the absence of the other. I earnestly hope that this lacuna in the settlement will be filled and a representative and powerful Provisional Government soon set up.

In assessing the results of the negotiations we must not forget that the two main objectives of the Congress have been the freedom and the unity of India. The Congress stand has been vindicated on both these points. The constitution-making body will be a purely Indian Assembly elected by Indian voters alone.

It will have the unfettered right to shape India's future Constitution and decide our relations with the British Commonwealth and the rest of the world and this sovereign constituent Assembly will legislate not for a divided but for a united India. All schemes of partition of India have been rejected once and for all. The Union Centre may be limited, but it will be powerful and organic and will integrate into one harmonious whole the many provincial, linguistic and cultural diversities which characterise contemporary India.

CONGRESS DEMANDS CONCEDED*

Commending the resolution to the House for its acceptance the Maulana Sahib said, "The way discussion on the Working Committee's resolution has been going on in the country makes me feel that the people seem to have forgotten the question that the Working Committee was faced with. The Committee had either to accept or reject certain proposals placed before it. It had to be guided by what the Congress had been demanding all these years. The Congress had demanded that India must have the right to chalk out her own future and frame her own constitution. For many years the British Government were not prepared to accept this demand of the Congress to allow Indians to frame their own Constitution. But circumstances had now forced the British Government to agree to India's fundamental demand of summoning of Constituent Assembly for the purpose of framing a constitution for a free and independent India.

The Cabinet Mission's proposals contained in the State paper issued on May 16, gave us this right to summon a Constituent Assembly to frame our own Constitution. This is what we have been demanding all these years. What will be our position, if we refuse that offer. If we refused the Offer, then there would be no meaning to accept our demand. The things that we have been demanding for years have been the one offer so long as the Committee felt convinced that it would lead the country to the end the Congress had before it.

The plan envisaged by the Cabinet Mission in their White Paper of May 16 consists of two aspects, political and communal. As far as political and communal implications of the proposals are concerned, the proposals make it clear that the Constituent Assembly will have the fullest right to frame a constitution for a free and independent India. We have been given the freedom to decide whether we wish to remain

**The Hindustan Times*, 7, July, 1946.

within the British Empire or be completely independent. It is for us to decide this vital question and the British Government does not wish to dictate to us in this respect as they have hitherto been doing.

In my first interview with the Cabinet Mission I made it absolutely clear to the Delegation that the Constituent Assembly we wished to summon should have unfettered freedom to frame a constitution for a free and independent India. The British Government has accepted this demand and has made it clear that the freedom of India is not under question and it has been granted without any question. Why then one should raise doubts in the face of such unequivocal declaration by the British Government ?

The Cabinet Mission's Proposals also have once and for all times cleared all doubts about the question of the division of India. These proposals have made it clear beyond a shadow of doubt that India shall remain undivided as a single unit with a strong Central Government composed of federal units.

"Our main demands having thus been accepted by the Cabinet Delegation, you will agree that the Working Committee had to accept the proposals after pointing out the defects in them. This is what the Working Committee has done by its resolution of June 26. My answer to those critics who say that we should not have accepted this proposal is that if we rejected this proposal now, it may not be possible at a later date in the future to secure proposals acceptable to us.

For some time now the Congress had been convinced that a completely unitary form of Central Government was unsuited for India as it is impracticable. The Congress had also felt convinced that a division of India as demanded by the Muslim League would prove disastrous to the country. The Congress had therefore decided to pursue a middle course. That is the reason why the Congress recommended a federal form of centre with maximum autonomy to the federating units including residuary powers. This will help to keep India undivided, and at

the same time ensure utmost autonomy to the units to develop themselves individually and freely to the maximum extent.

We placed this proposal before the Cabinet Mission which accepted this proposal in principles and produced a united centre with limited powers such as controlling Defence, Foreign Affairs, Communications and Finance to the extent needed to maintain the stability of the Union Centre. The Constituent Assembly could now find ways and means of strengthening the Union Centre by conceding to the Centre sufficient powers to levy enough finances to support itself and maintain an efficient defence force to protect the country from external aggression and internal turmoil.

The only new feature of the Cabinet Mission's proposal to which the Congress had not agreed fully was the one relating to grouping. The Working Committee has therefore made it clear that there should be no compulsion in the matter of grouping. The provinces should be free to decide whether they wish to join a particular group or not. We are confident that the interpretation we have put on the grouping clause is this interpretation.

The Congress Working Committee has made it clear that it cannot agree to the Europeans of Bengal and Assam participating in the framing of the constitution either by being members of the Constituent Assembly or participating in the elections to the Constituent Assembly by voting. If the Europeans eventually decide to exercise their so-called right of voting in the elections to the Constituent Assembly, then the Congress will have to reconsider its decision.*

REPLIES TO CRITICS**

Maulana Abul Kalam Azad dealt with the various criticisms made against the Delhi resolution by those who opposed

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*Maulana Abul Kalam Azad in conclusion welcomed the decision of the Bengal Europeans not to excercise their right of vote and hoped that Assam Europeans also would do likewise.

***The Amrita Bazar Patrika*, 9 July, 1946.

the resolution (Bombay July 7, 1946), said that many of the opposition speakers had stated that the British Government were responsible for sponsoring the Constituent Assembly. This was utterly wrong. "No one can say," declared the Maulana, "that the British Government send the Cabinet Mission to India to offer us the Constituent Assembly as a free gift. We have secured the Constituent Assembly as a result of our struggle and sacrifices during the past fifty years. The final struggle that was launched by Mahatma Gandhi in 1942 did, of course, hasten the pace of our freedom movement.

The British people and their Labour Government have realised that we, the people of India, are determinded to have our freedom and nothing on earth can prevent us from achieving our goal. The British Government should transfer power peacefully and quit or allow us to take it forcefully and they have chosen the wiser course.

I am unable to agree with those who say that by going into the Constituent Assembly we shall be weakening the Congress organisation. Why should anyone think that by going into the Constituent Assembly we shall weaken ourselves. Whatever difficulties may stand in our way we will overcome them as we are determined to reach our final goal.

Opposition speakers have exhibited a fear complex, vague fear of the unknown. I ask if there is any problem which has no difficulties inherent in it. It is of no use approaching any problem with a fear complex. If we do this we shall not be able to achieve anything at all.

In the proposed Constituent Assembly the Congress will have a definite majority and in spite of this we have fears as to how we are going to settle the fate of the country. We have won our struggle for freedom through sheer sacrifices and suffering. I will ask you not to falter and fritter away the fruits of victory by adopting a gloomy outlook and fear complex.

Statesmanship demands that we should be practical in our approach to problems. We must utilise opportunities as they present themselves to further our own ends. Sometimes circumstances may be such that we may have to decide for a struggle. At other times it may be that the door to our goal may be opened through negotiations and in such a situation it is our duty to enter into negitiations and enter through the doorway that is open.

The Congress has never departed from its fundamental principle or direct action. We have always sworn by it. We made it clear to the British Government even before the Cabinet Mission was sent to India that they should either give us our freedom or face a struggle. We were then told that we were indulging in threats. We made it clear that it was wrong of the British Government to regard it as a mere threat. Against this background we started the Delhi negotiations.

It has been argued that the Central Government will not be a strong one unless it has within its fold economic relations and finance. These questions will be settled by the Constituent Assembly. I do agree that the Central Government can never be affective unless it has the means to support itself. The Congress will never tolerate a weak Centre.

I want to make it clear that those who say that the Constituent Assembly is a trap are making a great mistake. There is no question of the Constituent Assembly being a trap. We asked for a Constituent Assembly to frame a Constitution for a free and independent India and the Cabinet Mission agreed to our demand. How then can anyone call it a trap ?

I want to emphasise that by accepting the Constituent Assembly proposal we shall lay at rest one of the longest standing communal problems. The Muslim League has been demanding all these years the divisions of India into Hindustan and Pakistan and two separate Constituent Assemblies to draw up separate Constitutions. Both these things have been abandoned by the Muslim League by its acceptance of the

Cabinet Mission proposals of May 16. The result of this proposal is that there shall be one united India and one Constituent Assembly with one Central Government.

I ask if this is not a great achievement. If you reject the Constituent Assembly as the opposition wants you to do, I ask if we shall not be adding to our problems and quarrels. Victory has come into our hands and please do not turn it into a defeat. (cheers) The door to the Constituent Assembly is open to enable us to draw up our own constitution. Please enter it and complete our task of framing our own constitution.

VALEDICTORY SPEECH AS CONGRESS PRESIDENT*

We have met here after six years. No elections to the All-India Congress Committee could be held till now owing to the War and the abnormal conditions created by the war. These six years have been years of profound importance in our history as they mark far-reaching changes in the international situation and our own struggle for our national independence. We are on the threshold of our freedom. Our freedom is coming not because of international changes but because of the revolution that has taken place in our own country resulting in great national awakening.

The new-All-India Congress Committee which has just assembled contains new blood and fresh minds. I am glad to welcome the new members as new blood always gives fresh vigour and strength. This meeting of the new All-India Congress Committee should have been held alongwith the plenary session of the Congress, but owing to abnornal conditions we have been able to hold the annual session. Now that a new All-India Congress Committee has been elected, I have decided to hand over the reins of office of the Congress President to Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru to allow the work of the Congress to be carried on uninterrupted, though the annual session itself may not be held for some time.

**The Amrita Bazar Patrika*, 8 July 1946.

When I took charge of the office of the Congress six years ago, we were struggling for our freedom. But today when J lay down the reins of the office I am happy to find that the question is no longer one of fighting for our freedom, as we are already on the threshold of freedom, but of working out the freedom that is coming. Only one further step is required for us to reach our goal.

EXHORTATION TO THE MUSLIMS*

My brethren ! You know what has brought me here today. This congregation at Shahjehan's historic mosque is not an unfamiliar sight for me. Here, I have addressed you on several previous occasions. Since then we have seen many ups and downs. At that time, instead of weariness, your faces reflected serenity, and your hearts, instead of misgivings, exuded confidence. The uneasiness on your faces and the desolation in your hearts that I see today, reminds me of the events of the past few years.

Do you remember ? I hailed you, you cut off my tongue : I picked my pen, you severed my hand ; I wanted to move forward, you broke off my legs ; I tried to turn over, and you injured my back. When the bitter political games of the last seven years were at their peak, I tried to wake you up at every danger signal. You not only ignored my call but revived all the past traditions of neglect and denial. As a result the same perils surround you today, whose onset had previously diverted you from the righteous path.

Today, mine is no more than an inert existence or a forlorn cry ; I am an orphan in my own motherland. This does not mean that I feel trapped in the original choice that I had made for myself, nor do I feel that there is no room left for my *aashiana* (nest). What it means is that my cloak is weary of

*On 23 October, 1947, Maulana Azad addressed the Muslims in Jama Masjid of Delhi. At that time they were homeless and afraid, having lost their political and national identity. He lambasted them for contemplating in terms of leaving the land of their forefathers and chasing after the false chimera of Pakistan.

your impudent grabbing hands. My sensitivities are injured, my heart is heavy. Think for one moment. What course did you adopt ? Where have you reached, and where do you stand now ? Haven't your senses become torpid ? Aren't you living in a constant state of fear ? This fear is your own creation, a fruit of your own deeds.

It was not long ago when I warned you that the two-nation theory was death-knell to a meaningful, dignified life ; forsake it. I told you that the pillars upon which you were leaning would inevitably crumble. To all this you turned a deaf ear. You did not realise that fleet-footed time would not change its course to suit your convenience. Time sped along. And now you have discovered that the so-called anchors of your faith have set you adrift, to be kicked around by fate. Their understanding of the word fate does not correspond with the lexicon of your belief. For them, fate is another name for lack of courage.

The chessboard of British gamesmanship has been upturned. Those pawns called 'leaders' which you had carved and installed, have disappeared overnight. You believed that the chessboard had been spread for ever and for ever, and the worship of those pawns was the *summum bonum* of your existence. I do not want to lacerate your wounds, or aggravate your agony. However, if you look into the past you will find that through hindsight you can unravel seveial mysteries

There was a time, when exhorting the need for achieving India's independence. I had called out to you.

No nation, however depraved, can stop the inevitable turn of events. A revolutionary political change has been inscribed in India's book of destiny. The twentieth century maelstrom of freedom is about to break India's chains of slavery. If you falter and fall behind the march of the times, if you remain inert and lethargic, the future historian will record that your flock, a cluster of seven crores, adopted an attitude towards freedom, which was characteristic of a community heading towards extinction. Today, the Indian flag has been hoisted in all

its majestic splendour. This is the very same flag which evoked sneers and contemptuous laughter from the rulers of the time.

It is true that time did not accede to your wishes ; instead, it bowed in deference to a nation's birthright. This turn of events has struck fear in your heart. Perhaps, you believe that something good has been taken away from you, and has been substituted with something evil. Yes, you are restless ; because you had not prepared yourselves for the good, and believed that the evil was, in fact, manna from heaven. I refer to your years of slavery under a foreign rule, under which you were treated as play-puppets. There was a time when our nation had plunged herself in pitched battle to overthrow the foreign rule ; and, today, the outcome of that struggle is causing you consternation. How should I berate you for your unbecoming haste ? Hardly have we completed our journey that you are showing signs of going astray.

My brothers ! I have always attempted to keep politics apart from personalities, thus avoiding those thorny valleys. That is why, some of my messages are often couched in allusions. But what I have to say today, needs to be direct and to the point. *The partition of India was a fundamental mistake.* The manner in which religious differences were incited, inevitably, led to the devastation that we have seen with our own eyes. Unfortunately, we are still seeing it at some places.

There is no use of recounting the events of the past seven years, nor will it serve any good. Yet, it must be stated that the debacle of Indian Muslims is the result of the colossal blunders committed by the Muslim League's misguided leadership. These consequences, however, were no surprise to me ; I have anticipated them from the very start.

Now that Indian politics has taken a new direction, there is no place in it for the Muslim League. Now the question is whether or not we are capable of any constructive thinking. For this, I have invited the Muslim leaders of India to Delhi, during the second week of November.

The gloom cast upon your lives is momentary ; I assure you we can be beaten by none save our ownselves ! I have always said, and I repeat it again today ; eschew your indecisiveness, your mistrust, and stop your misdeeds. This unique triple-edged weapon is more lethal than the two-edged iron sword which inflicts fatal wounds, which I have heard of !

Just think about this life of escapism that you have opted for in the sacred name of *Hijrat*. Get into the habit of exercising your own brains, and strengthening your own hearts. If you do so, only then will you realise how immature your decisions were.

Where are you going and why ? Raise your eyes. The minarets of Jama Masjid want to ask you a question. Where have you lost glorious pages from your chronicles ? Was it only yesterday that on the banks of the Jamuna, your caravans performed *wuzu* ? Today, you are afraid of living here ! Remember. Delhi has been nurtured with your blood. Brothers ! Create a basic change in yourselves. Today, your fear is as misplaced as your jubilation was yesterday.

The words *coward* and *frenzy* cannot be spoken in the same breath as the word Muslim. A true Muslim can be swayed neither by avarice nor apprehension. Don't get scared because a few faces have disappeared. The only reason they had herded you in a single fold was to facilitate their own flight. Today, if they have jerked their hand free from yours, what does it matter ? Make sure that they have not run away with your hearts. If your hearts are still in the right place, make them abode of God. Some thirteen hundred years ago, through an Arab *ummi**, God proclaimed : "Those who place their faith in God and are firm in their belief, no fear for them nor any sorrow." Winds blow in and blow out : tempests may gather but all this is short-lived. The period of trial is about to end. Change yourselves as if you had never been in such an abject condition.

*Illiterate. The Prophet of Islam could neither read nor write.

I am not used to altercation. Faced with your general indifference, however, I will repeat that the third force has departed, and along with it, its trappings of vanity. Whatever had to happen has happened. Politics has broken out of its old mould and a new cast is being prepared. If your hearts have still not changed and your minds still have reservations, it is a different matter. But, if you want a change, then take your cue from history and cast yourself in the new mould. Having completed a revolutionary phase, there still remains a few blank pages in the history of India. You can make yourselves worthy of filling those pages, provided you are willing.

Brothers! Keep up with the changes. Don't say: "We are not ready for the change." Get ready. Stars may have plummeted down but the sun is still shining. Borrow a few of its rays and sprinkle them in the dark caverns of your lives.

I do not ask you to seek certificates from the new echelons of power. I do not want you to lead a life of sycophancy as you did during the foreign rule. I want to remind you that these bright etchings which you see all around you, are relics of the *Qafilas* (caravans) of your forefathers. Do not forget them. Do not forsake them. Live like their worthy inheritors, and, rest assured, that if you do not wish to flee from this scene, nobody can make you flee. Come, today let us pledge that this country is ours, we belong to it, and any fundamental decision about its destiny will remain incomplete without our consent.

Today, you fear the earth's tremors : once you were virtually the earthquake itself Today, you fear the darkness : once your existence was the epicenter of radiance. Clouds have poured dirty waters and you have hitched up your trousers. Those were none but your forefathers who not only plunged headlong into the seas, but trampled the mountains, laughed at the bolts of lightning, turned away the tornados, challenged the tempests and made them alter their course. It is a sure sign of a dying faith that those who had once grabbed the collars of emperors, are, today, clutching at their

own throats. They have become oblivious of the existence of God as if they had never believed in Him.

Brothers ! I do not have a new prescription for you, I have the same old prescription that was revealed to the greatest benefactor of mankind, the prescription of the Holy Quran :

Do not fear and do not grieve. If you possess true faith, you will gain the upper hand.

The congregation is now at an end. What I had to say, I have said, briefly. Let me say once again, keep a grip on your senses. Learn to create your own surroundings, your own world. This is not a commodity that I can buy for you from the market-place. This can be bought only from the market-place of the heart, provided you can pay for it with the currency of good deeds.

May God's grace be on you.

THE END OF A DREAM*

The AICC met on 14 June 1947. I have attended many meetings of the AICC but this was one of the strangest sessions that it was my misfortune to attend. Congress which had always fought for the unity and independence of India was now considering an official resolution for dividing the country. Pandit Govind Ballabh Pant moved the resolution and after Sardar Patel and Jawaharlal spoke on it, Gandhiji had to intervene.

It was impossible for me to tolerate this abject surrender on the part of the Congress. In my speech I clearly said that the decision which the Working Committee had reached was the result of a most unfortunate development. Partition was a tragedy for India and the only thing that could be said in its favour was that we had done our best to avoid division but we had failed. Now there was no alternative and if we wanted freedom here and now, we must submit to the demand

* From Maulana Azad's *India Wins Freedom*, Chapter 15, revised edition of 1988.

for dividing India. We must not, however, forget that the nation is one and its cultural life is and will remain one. Politically we had failed and were therefore dividing the country. We should accept our defeat but we should at the some time try to ensure that our culture was not divided. If we put a stick in the water, it may appear that the water has been divided but the water remains the same and the moment the stick is removed, even the appearance of division disappears.

Sardal Patel did not like my speech. He spent almost the whole of his speech in trying to refute what I had said. He argued that the resolution for division did not arise out of weakness or compulsion, but it was the only true solution in the existing circumstances of India.

There were elements of comedy even in the midst of this great tragedy. There has been in Congress a group who have posed as nationalists but are in fact utterly communal in their outlook. They have always argued that India has no unified culture and held that whatever Congress may say, the social life of Hindus and Muslims is entirely different. Perhaps the most vocal member of this group of conservatives was Shri Purshottamdas Tandon. It was surprising to find that he suddenly appeared on the platform as the greatest upholder of Indian unity.

Shri Tandon opposed the resolution vehemently and the ground he gave was that the cultural and national life of India could not be divided. I agreed with what he was saying. I had no doubt that what he now said was true. I could not, however, forget that he and his colleagues had all their life opposed such a view. It was strange that they should now at this eleventh hour raise the cry for undivided India.

After the first day's debate, there was very strong feeling against the Working Committee's resolution. Neither Pandit Pant's persuasiveness nor Sardar Patel's eloquence had been able to persuade the people to accept this resolution. How could they when it was in a sense a complete denial of all that Congress had said since its inception? It therefore became

necessary for Gandhiji to intervene in the debate. He appealed to the Members to support the Congress Working Committee. He added that he had always opposed partition and no one could deny this fact. He, however, felt that a situation had now been created when there was no alternative. Political realism demanded the acceptance of the Mountbatten Plan and he would appeal to the members to accept the resolution moved by Pandit Pant

When the resolution was put to the vote, 29 voted for it and 15 against. Even Gandhiji's appeal could not persuade more members to vote for the partition of the country.

The resolution was no doubt passed, but what was the condition of the people's mind ? All hearts were heavy at the idea of partition. Hardly anyone could accept the resolution without mental reservations. Even those who accepted partition had all their feelings against it. This was bad enough. What was worse was the kind of insidious communal propaganda which was gaining ground. It was being openly said in Congress circles that Hindus in Pakistan need not have any fears as there would be four and a half crores of Muslims in India and if there was any oppression on Hindus in Pakistan, the Muslims in India would have to bear the consequences.

In the meeting of the AICC, the members from Sind opposed the resolution vehemently. They were given all kinds of assurances. Though not on the public platform, in private discussions they were told that if they suffered any disability or indignity in Pakistan, India would retaliate on the Muslims in India.

When I first became aware of such suggestions I was shocked. I immediately saw that this was a dangerous sentiment and could have the most unfortunate and far-reaching repercussions. It implied that partition was being accepted on the basis that in both India and Pakistan, there would be hostages who would be held responsible for the security of the minority community in the other State. The idea of retaliation as a method of assuring the rights of minorities seemed

to me barbarous. Later events proved how justified my apprehensions were. The river of blood which flowed after partition on both sides of the new Frontier grew out of this sentiment of hostages and retaliation.

Some members of the Congress realised how dangerous such theories were. I remember in particular Kiran Shankar Roy, one of the Congress leaders of Bengal, who first brought this to my notice. He also spoke to Acharya Kripalani who was then the President of the Congress and pointed out that it was a most dangerous theory. Once such a feeling was allowed to grow, it would lead to oppression and the murder of Hindus in Pakistan and of Muslims in India. Nobody, however, paid any attention to Kiran Shankar Roy. In fact, many ridiculed him for his fears. They also told him that once India was divided, we must accept the theory of hostages. They argued that it was only in this way that the Hindus of Pakistan could be protected. K.S. Roy was not convinced and he came to me almost in tears. He never accepted the assurances which some of the Congress leaders had held out and he lived to see the fulfilment of his worst fears.

The British Government had originally fixed a period of fifteen months for completing the arrangement for the transfer of power. Mr Attlee had in fact explicitly stated on 20 February 1947 that it was the definite intention of the British Government to effect the transfer of power to responsible Indian hands by a date not later than June, 1948. A great deal had however, happened between 20 February and 3 June. Now that the plan for partition was accepted, Lord Mountbatten declared that the scheme should be brought into effect as quickly as possible. His motives were perhaps mixed. On the one hand, he wished that the British should transfer the responsibility to Indian hands as early as possible. On the other, he probably had apprehensions that delay might bring up new impediments to his plan. The fate of the Cabinet Mission Plan had shown that delay in the implementation had given rise to second thoughts and had ultimately led to the rejection of the Plan.

Lord Mountbatten set for himself a period of three months during which to carry out the task of partitioning India. It

was not an easy task and I openly expressed my doubts about the possibility of carrying out so complicated a Plan in such a short time. I must pay tribute to Lord Mountbatten for the efficiency and ability with which he presided over his task. He had such a mastery of detail and such quick grasp that in less than three months all the problems were solved and on August 1947, India was divided into two States.

TRIBUTES

I have had the privilege of being associated with Maulana Abu'l Kalam Azad in national work since 1920. In the knowledge of Islam he is surpassed by no one. He is a profound Arabic scholar. His nationalism is as robust as his faith in Islam. That he is today the supreme head of the Indian National Congress has deep meaning which should not be lost sight of by every student of Indian politics.

—Mahatma Gandhi in May, 1940

There is a Persian proverb, *Buzurgi b-aql ast na b-sal, Tawangari b-dil ast, na b-mal,* which means : superiority or greatness proceeds from wisdom and not from years ; even as generosity proceeds from large-heartedness and not from possession of wealth. If ever there was a manifestation of the truth of this saying in our history, it was when Maulana Azad was elected President only after two to three years' service of the Congress at the age of 34. Within this short period of great national awakening and excitement he had deeply impressed his colleagues and co-workers not only by his eloquence, but also by the keenness of his intellect, the soundness of his counsel and his capacity to reconcile conflicting viewpoints and bring about amity in the midst of diversity. His devotion to the country, preparedness for sacrifice and courage of conviction were demonstrated again and again during the long period of struggle, a great portion of which he, like many of his colleagues, spent in prison or detention camps.

He held fast to Hindu-Muslim unity and never budged an inch, standing firmly by it like a rock in the midst of unchari-

table criticism and worse from many of his own co-religionists. Naturally enough, all sections of the country came to love and respect him. His counsel was sought to resolve all complicated tangles and it was freely and frankly given without fear or favour. Equally, naturally, this trust in his wisdom, integrity and patriotism was exhibited when he was again elected President of the Congress in 1940 at a time when the Hindu-Muslim controversy was reaching a breaking point and a demand for a separate independent State for Muslims was being formulated and expressed. He continued as President during the most momentous period of Indo-British relations when negotiations for transfer of power were carried on again and again between the Congress through its President, Maulana Azad, and the representatives of the British Government.

I doubt if anyone else has held the responsible position of the President of the Congress continuously for a period longer than or even equal to that of the Maulana and this too at a time when most delicate and momentous questions were discussed. The Congress trusted his wisdom and integrity and he came out like pure gold through this most trying ordeal when the great bulk of his co-religionists were ranged on the other side.

—Dr. Rajendra Prasad

My acquaintance with Maulana Abul Kalam Azad dates as far back as 1913. It was through the columns of his weekly Urdu journal, *Al-Hilal*. Those were the great days of Indian journalism—the days of Tilak, Bipin Pal and Aurobindo and a host of other writers. Maulana's journalistic contribution ranked among the best. I was then a professor of history and politics in a college in Bihar. It was a wonder to me how a man so young in years and who knew no modern European language, could yet discuss the internal and international contemporary political scene with the assurance of a mature and well-trained expert. He viewed the question of Indian freedom in the context of colonialism in general, and the Islamic lands in particular. For him, the emancipation of India from the shackles of British imperialism was a necessary condition for breaking the chains that had been and were being

forged by Western imperialist nations, principally British, to bind Islamic lands. Indian soldiers had been used everywhere to enslave other lands and peoples. For the Maulana, therefore, the Indian national struggle was not only a duty to the motherland but also to Islam.

For what the Maulana wrote in his paper and his suspected revolutionary activities, he was interned in Ranchi in 1916. At Ranchi, too, though I had not yet met him personally, I was in touch with him through mutual friends in the revolutionary movement of those days.

The Maulana Sahib was released from detention in 1920. The Independence and the Khilafat movements had already started under Gandhiji's leadership. The prominent Muslim leaders in the movement were Hakim Ajmal Khan, Dr. Ansari, Maulana Sahib and the Ali brothers. The last, the Ali brothers, were then the most active and popular leaders. They were a contrast to the first three, who were urbane, refined and sensitive, but more useful in the Council Chamber than at public meetings and demonstrations. Maulana Sahib was often present at public and Khilafat gatherings, but he would quietly and unobtrusively take his place at the back of the platform ; he would rarely speak. But when he was prevailed upon to do so, it was a delight to listen to his silvery eloquence and well-reasoned presentation of a cause he had made his own. There was no effort to rouse emotions. Yet, in his case reason could be so reasonably convincing that it did affect the emotions. Once I asked Gandhiji why he appeared to prefer the Ali brothers with their exuberant spirit and loud tone to the intellectual, cultural and retiring Maulana Sahib ? Gandhiji's reply was significant. He said that he knew the great learning of the Maulana and his refined ways, but however much he tried to induce him to the forefront, he would resist the attempt. This would not make for leadership of a popular movement. I have not related this talk to make any invidious comparison, but in the interest of historical truth and to bring out the character of the Maulana.

But what he lacked in mass appeal at the time was more than made up by his unswerving and steady loyalty to his ideals of national Independence and Hindu-Muslim unity. Many of his Muslim compatriots of those days fell prey to the British policy of keeping the two major communities apart, but the Maulana remained always faithful to the path he had chalked out for himself in his early youth. He steadily worked on, undeterred by the opposition of his community and the insults heaped upon him.

In 1923, he was chosen the President of the Special Session of the Congress held in Delhi. It was his moderating influence that avoided a cleavage at the time between the Pro-Changers and the No-Changers.

What, then, are the outstanding impressions left on those who had the privilege of being associated with the Maulana for more than three decades, particularly in the days of India's struggle for Independence ? It is that in matters fundamental, he had thought out things for himself in his early youth and had come to certain definite conclusions. These were that India must be free, free not only for its own sake but for the sake of the rest of the colonial world, including the Islamic countries. There was, therefore, no cleavage between his duties as a citizen of India and as a Muslim divine. Also, when like some others, he joined the non-violent movement for the Independence of India under Gandhiji's leadership, he did so with the utmost sincerity and conviction. He realized that the only way to Independence was to bring into the movement, the masses of India, without whose combined action, freedom of the country would be impossible. This could only be done through avoidance of secrecy and through non-violence. Fortified by this conviction, he never wavered in his faith or in the leadership of Gandhiji. Of course, like many others, he did not believe in non-violence as a creed, but remained loyal to the policy that had been adopted by the Congress after careful thought and consideration, on practical grounds, of what was possible. For Maulana Sahib, there was no further toying with the idea of a violent revolution or association with its advo-

cates. The same cannot be said of several other leaders, specially in Bengal.

These convictions stood the test of time. No vicissitude in his own political life or the alignment of forces in the country could change them. No misrepresentation of his motives, no calumny, no insults from inferior persons—for he was a sensitive soul—could deflect him from the path he had chosen for himself. He, who stood for good sense and moderation in all things, stood like a rock where his basic convictions were concerned. About these there could be no compromise....

From the very beginning of his career, Maulana Sahib was something of an internationalist. The circumstances of his birth, upbringing, and education and studies endowed him with a wide perspective. As an Islamic divine one would have expected him to be rather orthodox in his religious views. But his attitude towards religion was very liberal and catholic. This was not because he was indifferent or easy-going but because of his philosophical and historical knowledge and his understanding and generous heart. With his innate goodness, it was impossible for him to think that salvation for humanity lay through a particular religion, a particular prophet or one set of doctrines, rituals and dogmas. For instance, he would not have considered that the men of other faiths with whom he was associated in national life, would have been better or more acceptable to him if they had but accepted Islam. This was the attitude of some Muslim leaders who took part in the Khilafat and the national movement in the twenties. Maulana considered that the essence of religion lay in moral conduct, and, if one delved deeper into the dark recesses of life, in mysticism .. His was essentially a voice of reason, which would also mean moderation and sanity. These qualities were characteristic of him even in the revolutionary fight for India's Independence.

—Acharya J.B. Kripalani

Young Abul Kalam began to question himself. If religion expresses a universal truth, why should there be differences and

conflicts among men professing different religions? Why should each religion claim to be the sole depesitory of truth and condemn all others as false?

For nearly three years this mental unrest continued. He passed from one phase to another. Ultimately all the bonds imposed on his mind by family and upbringing were shattered. Free from the shackles of rigid beliefs he became 'Azad'. The freedom of thought and action introduced him to new vistas of activities. He came in contact with political revolutionary leaders like the venerable Shyam Sundar Chakravarty and Aurobindo Ghosh. This instilled in his heart love for the freedom of India and made him an ardent revolutionary. He helped to organize secret revolutionary societies in many important towns of northern India. In order to study political movements in Islamic countries he proceeded on a tour of Iraq, Egypt, Syria and Turkey. He also visited Paris. He came in contact with the followers of Mustafa Kamal Pasha and met leaders of the Young Turk movement. All these contacts made him an ardent nationalist and a devotee of democracy and secularism, which led to his opposing pro British Muslim communalism. At the age of 24 he launched *Al-Hilal*, which created a revolutionary stir among the masses. The Aligarh school of Muslim leadership felt threatened. The Government demanded a heavy security from *Al-Hilal*. The security furnished was forfeited, and, in 1915, *Al-Hilal* press was confiscated. He started another paper *Al-Balagh*, which also met with the same fate. But these papers created their impact. They awakened the Muslim masses and instilled in them feelings of patriotism, communal harmony, and composite culture.

This long internment of three and a half years gave Maulana Azad an opportunity to study various problems which faced the country. He delved into the glorious traditions of Indian secularism. "It is not enough that one should respect his own religion but one should have equal respect for others' religion also". He realized that in the Indian context secularism does not mean lack of religion, but *equal respect for all religions* (*sarva dharma sambhav*). His deep study of

Quran had also led him to the same conclusion. In his monumental work on the Quran he has convincingly argued this point. "The Quran is very emphatic that no compulsion should be exercised in matters of religion."

Azad states that the obvious significance of this remarkable text is that the essentials are common to all religions ; that truth is universal, and not the monopoly of any one race or teacher, that non-essentials vary with time, place, and circumstances, that the same fundamental truths have been revealed by God in different scriptures, in different languages, through different teachers, in different nations.

Maulana Azad says, "If humanity is to be brought together it will only be on the basis of mutual understanding, especially in matters of fundamental belief. The philosophical understanding of the nature of ultimate reality, and the practice of love, regardless of the distinction of creed, community, and nationality, these are the basic teachings of the Quran."

—**B.N. Pande**

4

C.R. DAS

[Also known as 'Deshbandhu' (Brother of the Countrymen), Chittaranjan Das (1870-1925) played a brief but momentous role in the freedom movement of our country. A religious devotee, a poet, an eminent lawyer, and an active political figure, Das had all the qualities of a great man. He was a lover of freedom and so he strongly denounced the Rowlatt Act of 1919 and other ordinances that crushed civil liberties. He put his finger at the provisions of the Montford Constitution of 1919 and even opposed the idea of expressing any thanks to the Secretary of State for India (Montagu). Though a critic of the programme of 'non-cooperation', he threw himself heart and soul with Gandhiji after his thesis was confirmed at the Nagpur Congress held in 1920. In 1921 he was chosen as the President of the Indian National Congress, but he could not attend it on account of being under detention. He was re-elected for the post and so he presided over the Gaya Congress held in 1922. However, as he did not appreciate Gandhi's action of abruptly suspending the non cooperation movement in February, 1922, he preferred to adopt a different strategy. He founded a party (Swaraj Party) in 1923 (with Motilal Nehru as its Secretary) with a resolve to 'wreck the Reforms of 1919 from within'. Thus, he and his followers were called 'pro-changers', for they preferred to adopt the strategy of entering the Legislative Councils through elections with a determination to expose and defeat the bureaucratic administration and thereby win self-rule for the country. This was inconsistent with Gandhi's line of non-cooperation and so the critics of Das were called 'no-changers'. In the elections of 1923 the Swarajists could achieve remarkable success and Das could make his mark on the proceedings of Bengal Legislative Council. However, Das deserves to be admired

for aligning nationalism with the ideology of socialism. In 1923 he presided over the Lahore session of the All-India Trade Union Congress and supported measures for ameliorating the condition of the working class. He also presided over the Calcutta session of the A-ITUC held in the following year. On one occasion he said that Swaraj meant "freedom for humble peasants and workers and not only for the rich and middle classes who formed an insignificant minority." His premature death caused a great loss to the country. In his letter written to Mahatma Gandhi dated 21 July, 1925, Motilal Nehru regretted that the nation "sustained an irreparable loss in consequence of Das's death."]

HINDU-MUSLIM PACT*

(December, 1923)

It has been argued by the opposers of the Pact that there is no necessity for it, that the Pact, it passed, would retard the progress of *Swaraj* ..Does not a promise they make and a pledge they have taken remind them of the great thing, for the attainment of which such a promise is made ?...I for one will not have fathered such a Pact, which is but a mere instrument and which leaves aside the consideration that they are men first. I only call upon Hindus and Mahomedans alike to sacrifice a little bit of each other's small and petty interests for the cause

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*Extracts from a speech at the Bengal Provincial Conference held at Sirajgunj in June, 1924. As a zealous crusader of Hindu-Muslim unity, C.R. Das concluded Hindu-Muslim Pact, also known as the 'Bengal Pact.' The Pact was severely criticised by a large vocal section of the Hindus who opined that Das had played into the hands of Muslims and surrendered the Hindu interests. At this, Das, greatly agitated and excited, opined, "You may delete the Bengal Pact from the resolution but you cannot delete Bengal from the Indian National Congress. Bengal demands her right of having her suggestion considered by the National Assembly. What right has anybody to say that Bengal has to be deprived of her right ? Bengal will not be deleted in this unceremonious fashion. I cannot understand the argument of those who cry to 'delete the Bengal Pact'. Is Bengal an untouchable ? Will you deny Bengal the right of suggestion on such a vital question ? If you do, Bengal can take care of itself. You can't refuse Bengal the right to make a suggestion."

of Indian *Swaraj* which is to the interest of both the communities.

So long as Hindus and Mahomedans do not unite, *Swaraj* will be an impossibility, and will always remain a theme of impracticable fancy...To think that the two communities will merge their respective individuality and make up a new community is inconceivable...That alone will bring real unity... Life is certainly greater than dogma and logic, and I want you to be men—whole men—who will obey none but the will of God, and the Pact is necessary for the growth of that high ideal of manhood and Indian nationality among the two communities. Whether you call the Pact a covenant or an instrument, it is necessary for the establishment of Indian *Swaraj*, for the attainment of which I am prepared to shed every drop of my blood.. I have full faith in Bengal and believe that she will yet rise to the height of the occassion and accept the Pact. It is the will of God. *Swaraj* is coming and you must be ready to welcome it by your sacrifice and suffering. Let this Bengal Provincial Conference sitting at Sirajganj lay the foundation of Hindu-Muslim unity and establish India's freedom.

Resolution Passed at the Conference

It is resolved that in order to establish real foundation of Self-Government in this province it is necessary to bring about a pact between the Hindus and the Mahomedans of Bengal dealing with the rights of each community when the foundation of Self-Government is secured.

Be it resolved that;

(*a*) Representation in the Bengal Legislative Council on the population basis with separate electorates subject to such adjustment as may be necessary by the all-India Hindu-Muslim Pact and by the Khilafat and the Congress.

(*b*) Representation to local bodies to be in the proportion of 60 to 40 percent in every district—60 to the community which is in the majority, and 40 to the minority.